

# THE EXPOSITORY TIMES

## Notes of Recent Exposition

THE fact that not only articles but whole books have been written about Rudolf Bultmann and his understanding of the Christian message is proof enough of his significance in the world of theology; and the fact that such books continue to be written (and translated) shows that this significance is still a very lively, present factor in the theological thought of to-day. His distinctive emphases are points of view which we need to know and to reckon with, even though we may not accept them in their entirety. For this reason we welcome a very fair and balanced account of Bultmann's theological position, which admirably combines genuine appreciation with shrewd criticism. The title of the book is *Gospel and Myth in the Thought of Rudolf Bultmann*,<sup>1</sup> and its author is an Italian, Giovanni MIEGGE, Professor of Church History in the Waldensian Faculty of Theology in Rome. It has been translated into English by Bishop Stephen Neill, whose own deep appreciation of the book is itself strong commendation of it. He gives as his reason for undertaking the work of translation: 'I believe this book may be as enlightening to some other readers as it has been to me'.

The book not only introduces us fully to Bultmann's thought, but also gives a brief history of the discussions which his opinions have provoked, especially those concerning the re-interpretation of what he regards as the mythical element in the New Testament. But besides a review of the controversy over 'Demythologizing', there is a description and assessment of Bultmann's contributions in the study of *Formgeschichte*, and also of his belief that the message of the New Testament can to-day best be expounded in terms borrowed from Existentialism. At the same time we are enabled to see that these three interests are not unconnected, but integral parts of a coherent whole.

Bultmann's study of the forms in which the gospel traditions were handed on orally before they became stabilized in writing in the Gospels as we know them led him to feel deep misgivings about the historical reliability of their contents.

<sup>1</sup> Lutterworth Press; 25s. net.

These, he argued, did not so much present Jesus as He was, as Jesus as the Church came to believe Him to be. They declared not the facts of history, but the faith of the Church. Since the stories about Jesus (and even His recorded words) could not be regarded as literally true, but only true in so far as they served to convey symbolically the Church's faith, they needed to be radically interpreted, so that their real significance could be separated from their outward form. They had to be stripped of their so-called 'mythological' clothes in which they were dressed, and their fundamental significance laid bare. Moreover, the inner truth of all the great affirmations of the New Testament is not to be found in factual statements about Jesus or God, but in the significance that God and Christ may have in man's experience, leading him to a true 'understanding of himself', setting him free from 'unauthentic existence' for 'authentic existence'.

Bultmann's influence has undoubtedly been a disturbing one in the Church; but Professor MIEGGE welcomes the fearless honesty with which he faces the problems of faith, and with which he asks others to face them. 'The great service he has rendered has been to set forth these problems with a clarity and courage such as are not always welcomed in ecclesiastical circles.' He also recognizes that Bultmann, in his re-statement of the essentials of the Christian faith, is fired with a zeal for evangelism, a longing to make these essentials acceptable to educated men of this modern scientific age, who do not believe in miracles, or evil spirits, or the resurrection of dead bodies, and who cannot accept the Christian faith if these are an essential part of it. Moreover he acknowledges Bultmann's basic faith in the Kerygma of the Church as the Word of God. Bultmann 'is convinced that the estimate which the earliest Christian community formed of Jesus Christ is in all essentials correct, at least in the sense that in Christ the Christian community had really encountered God, and that for it the eschatological event had really taken place'.

Professor MIEGGE's appreciation, however, is not uncritical. He wonders how it can be that



Bultmann seems to wish to strip Jesus of any special knowledge or understanding of Himself and His own significance while conceding to the Early Church supernatural discernment concerning the gospel of Jesus Christ. The faith of the Church for Bultmann seems a far bigger thing than the One responsible for creating that faith. So Miegge asks: Who was this Man 'who was able to call into being in the minds of His disciples a conviction so deep and tenacious that it was able to survive even the shock of His crucifixion; the conviction that with Him they had entered into the moment of the great climacteric of the ages; and that they had become, and that in following Him they were, the eschatological community, the community of the last days?' 'In Bultmann's reconstruction the Jesus of History is resolved, almost without remainder, into the Christ of faith', and Professor MIEGGE sees no reason for this extreme of historical scepticism.

Next Professor MIEGGE patiently analyses all the furore over the use of the word 'myth' in relation to the New Testament, and the insistence on 'Demythologizing'. One wonders whether a great deal of unnecessary misunderstanding would not have been avoided if the word 'myth' had not been introduced into the argument. No two scholars seem able to agree on a precise definition of the word, and even when a definition is proposed, the word is beset with so many over-tones and under-tones that few readers can hear the word unaffected by prejudice. Of course there is pictorial and symbolic language in the New Testament, but in the sense that the word 'myth' has normally been used the old-fashioned idea of a 'three-decker' universe, with heaven above and hell below, is not a 'myth'. It is a pictorial way of speaking, and no educated man any longer takes it literally, though he may still use it because of the symbolic value he finds in it. Moreover the story, for instance, of the Baptism of Jesus is not a myth as the word is normally used. 'The Biblical myths are not myths in the strict sense of the term; they are symbols of something else, and it would be an error on our part to confuse them with myths which are nothing but myths. . . . May it not seem that this hullabaloo of academic controversy about the elimination of the mythological from the New Testament has been a little excessive?'

Professor MIEGGE next considers Bultmann's interpretation of the New Testament message in terms of existentialist philosophy. He welcomes it because it declares an undoubted truth, though he questions whether it embraces the whole truth.

All that Christ did is incomplete until it has lifted a man to a new level of 'eschatological existence', until it has enabled him to pass out of 'un-authentic existence' into one that is 'authentic'. We know Christ through His benefits. His Cross is incomplete till a man 'dies with Christ', His resurrection incomplete till a man 'is risen with Christ'. But the Cross is more than the Christian experience of it; and the Resurrection is more than the Resurrection faith. 'The centre of Christian faith in all the centuries is not "Christ in us", much less "Christ in us" understood within the narrow limits of an "understanding of the self", in which our own person occupies the centre of the stage; the centre of faith has always been Christ Himself, or, to put it in other words, *Christ in Himself*.'

MIEGGE's summary of it all is this: 'It is necessary to affirm the truth and objective reality of the historical and supra-historical event which is summed up in the name of Jesus Christ, the Crucified and Risen One; Christian faith stands or falls with the objective truth of these events. But it is also necessary clearly to recognize that Christian faith is far more than the mere repetition of already well-known truths—it is a reliving of the event of Christ in our own personal existence here and now. To believe in Christ crucified means to take up our own cross and follow Him; to believe in the resurrection means to live in the fellowship of Him who is both the Living One and the Coming One. To believe in the Kingdom of God means to live on the eschatological level, that is to say, in the dimension of the eternal that stoops down to enter into time. To believe in the Gospel means, in short, to be oneself an incarnation of the Gospel.'

What should be the attitude of the State to religion? The conservative churchman and statesman, standing in a tradition coming down from the Middle Ages, looks for an answer to the establishment of the Church. By the end of the seventeenth century it had become clear that for the peace and prosperity of the State such establishment must be dissociated from persecution. Yet it was held that the State, while making provision for dissenting minorities, should profess one faith and recognize one Church. By that time, however, a new liberal tradition had appeared. This claimed that the State has no competence in religion, that all churches should be free, and that the State should neither favour nor hinder the religious views and practices of its citizens, except where any form of religion seemed



incompatible with public morality. The State should be neutral as between religious bodies and secular as itself, making no specific religious profession and giving no religious instruction.

These views still have their champions; but the sharp opposition between them seems irrelevant to contemporary situations. We have before us two publications, differing much in size and scope, but both touching upon this matter and providing real illumination. Dr. Nathaniel MICKLEM in a recent pamphlet—*Politics and Religion*<sup>1</sup>—points out that the liberal attitude assumed that the members of the community would share a common outlook, that the general principles of Christianity would be the background of education in the schools, and that thus the common outlook would be maintained in harmony with Christian ethical teaching. The rise of totalitarian systems, which in vital respects are opposed to the principles of Christianity, has exposed the precarious nature of these assumptions. It is now clear that if national unity is to be maintained there must be a body of principles, a philosophy of life, accepted by the great majority of the citizens, and that under present conditions there is no certainty of this unless the State takes deliberate action. While persecution for religious opinion is abhorrent, and censorship except in the case of the encouragement of immorality is objectionable, yet for the sake of its own peace and unity the State cannot be wholly neutral in respect of religion, as is evident if one contemplates Christian principles being taught in one school and Communist principles in another, both State supported.

In the unified world which the age of science has brought upon us there can neither be peace nor prosperity except on principles of law and freedom, of toleration and respect, which ultimately rest upon a doctrine of the nature of man; and that doctrine of the nature of man seems to emerge from a doctrine of God. The liberal-democratic way of life presupposes a moral law transcendent over nations and their rulers. If there be no transcendent justice, then no limit can be set to the dominance of the powerful and ruthless over weaker individuals within the State and over weaker peoples without. The State may refuse to take sides in disputes about theology or church order; but for the sake of internal freedom and decent conduct towards outsiders the State must favour the inculcation of ideas of a transcendent righteousness to which all are responsible. Hence, says Dr. MICKLEM, arises

<sup>1</sup> Pall Mall Press; 2s. net.

an apparent contradiction: 'on the one side freedom requires that the State be neutral in matters of religious opinion; on the other side, freedom requires that the State be not neutral in religious matters, since the fear of God is the foundation and necessary defence of liberty'.

At this point we turn to Professor John C. BENNETT of Union Theological Seminary, New York, whose recent book—*Christians and the State*<sup>2</sup>—in its wide scope ranges over many questions about the State and its nature and functions as well as the topics implied in its title. He points out that in America the State is not in principle secular for there is an officially recognized theism which appears in State documents, in the official utterances of Presidents and in the provision made for prayer on many official occasions. Yet, because of what he calls the American 'religious pluralism', this national acknowledgment of God cannot have more content than a vague theism. A strong case can indeed be made in some contexts for a secular state. Christians in India know that their religious freedom depends on the fact that India is a secular state. If it were not it would be a Hindu state. That would not only threaten the religious freedom of other religious communities, but it would also involve the hindrance of social and economic reforms by the barriers of Hindu custom and law.

Professor BENNETT, however, sets aside the arguments for a secular state. The danger is that it may become a secularizing state. When the representatives of a nation are completely silent about God, they may forget that they are under a higher judgment, and the nation may lose all sense of a transcendent dimension in the light of which the nation and state realize their limits. A state that desires to remain neutral in its attitude to the great religious traditions need not proclaim itself a secular state, indifferent to the religious life of its people, nor need it profess a common-denominator religion. 'When the word "God" is used it should mean to the citizens not some common-denominator idea of deity but what they learn about God from their religious traditions'. It would seem that Professor BENNETT would agree with Dr. MICKLEM that while the State may not interfere with a man's private religion, yet for the sake of a free and humane society and for the sake of peace among the nations there must be a national religion, so to call it, which shall include a belief in a Justice transcendent over men and classes and interests and nations and in the respect due to man as man. 'The

<sup>2</sup> Scribner's, New York; \$4.50.



State is not interested in religions but is deeply involved in the religion of the people.'

As might be surmised our authors take similar attitudes to the doctrine of natural law which is so prominent in Roman Catholic teaching. Both set aside the traditional theory that the eternal law of righteousness is so clearly reflected in the conscience of man that the law-giver has simply to apply agreed moral maxims to affairs of State. That implies a static legalism which assumes a too detailed knowledge of what is right in all circumstances and fails to allow for historical development. Yet, though we have to discover in any particular situation what is just, we know what we mean by justice. We are not therefore shut up to a decision between the claim that all men are aware of the same moral standards and a thorough moral scepticism. We can hold that the moral convictions in Western society are so intertwined with the Judæo-Christian tradition that it is impossible to separate them, and yet

that these moral convictions have independent classical roots too, and can be defended by considerations recognized as true apart from the Christian revelation. There is an objective moral order which presses upon every man and is discovered in part by most men. If this is called natural law, the term may have to be detached from some elements in its history; yet that should not prevent our recognizing an important overlapping in moral awareness between Christians and non-Christians, which should make for the community of outlook needful for social unity and world peace even in a religiously pluralistic society.

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#### Hellenistic Thought in New Testament Times

Dr. William Barclay is on holiday this month. The next article in this series will appear in the September issue. The title is 'The Way of Renunciation'.

## Interpreting the Bible

BY THE REVEREND T. GLYN THOMAS, M.A., WREXHAM

THE question 'What does the Bible say?' may be answered for the great majority of people in one word: nothing! For it is not given an opportunity to say anything. It is not a book that counts. Even in homes which can boast of a copy of it, it is often among the antiques, for display rather than for use. Vast numbers of people never hear it read save on the occasion of a wedding or a christening or a burial. For millions of people, here as in the rest of Christendom, its language is a foreign tongue and its contents either unknown, or, if known, irrelevant. For most of the people of England, quipped Mr. Duff Cooper, there are only two religions, Roman Catholicism which is wrong, and the rest which don't count. The quip, though more witty than true, yet contains a painful germ of truth. 'The danger is not lest the soul should doubt whether there is any bread, but lest, by a lie, it should persuade itself that it is not hungry,' said Simone Weil. In so far as the sustenance offered by Holy Writ is concerned, the lie appears to be triumphant.

But what of those for whom the Bible is a book that matters, who seek to know what it says? How are they to read it? For in our day, sad to relate, the Word of God 'pierces' not 'to the

division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow,' but to the division of universities and training colleges, of grammar schools and churches, and even of homes and families. The Book which we would love to offer as a unifying force in an irreligious age, has proved to be a cause of division, often of bitter division. God's Book divides God's people.

There are, speaking generally, two ways of approaching the Bible, which may perhaps be described as the critical and the fundamentalist. Neither side may be granted a monopoly of the term 'evangelical,' for there belong to each, men and women who are truly evangelical in mind and spirit. And it must be remembered that many who take the critical approach still draw conservative conclusions. The present-day critical approach to the Scriptures should not be identified with the liberalism that characterized the end of the last century and the beginning of this, as is too readily assumed by the school of thought that is represented by bodies such as the Inter-Varsity Fellowship, which misinterpretation is to some degree the cause of their antagonism to the Student Christian Movement. Since the word 'liberalism' has become so frowned upon in so many quarters,



would it not be well to adopt some other designation, such as 'liberality,' which is suggested by Dr. A. R. Vidler in his *Essays in Liberality*? By 'liberality' Dr. Vidler implies, he tells us, not a creed or a body of philosophical assumptions, but a way of thinking and a climate of character; the contrary not to the conservative, but to the fanatical and the bigoted. He quotes with approval these words of F. S. Oliver: 'In the supreme events, it is not sufficient to be reasonably persuaded; the man who is to succeed must be unreasonably confident.' Must these two types for ever be divorced? asks Dr. Vidler. Must we always have to choose between Luther and Erasmus? Is it not within the power of the Holy Spirit to unite in the same person the unshakable conviction of the prophet and the healthy scepticism of the wise man? However that may be, the kind of liberalism that enquires how much of the Bible can be dispensed with, and what is the least common denominator of Christian belief, is not much in evidence to-day.

One of the most marked features of religious life in our island in the last quarter of a century is the way in which the fundamentalist approach to the Scriptures has spread. It is evident in the universities, the training colleges and the schools. Professing Christians tend to divide into two groups according as they accept the standpoints of the S.C.M. or the I.V.F. and the relationship between them varies from cool tolerance to hot antagonism. The most that can be said about them in many of our seats of learning is that, religiously speaking, they have a nodding acquaintance but don't speak!

The official and authoritative exposition of the fundamentalist approach to the Scriptures is contained in *Evangelical Belief: The Official Interpretation of the Doctrinal Basis of the I.V.F.* and in the two introductory articles to the I.V.F. *New Bible Commentary*. From these the following conclusions may be drawn. The Bible is a direct message from God Himself. We accept its authority through faith. The Bible demands authority for the written word. 'It makes no artificial distinction between the inward content of the Word of God and its outward form. By its self-authentication as God's Word written the Bible challenges us directly either to faith or unbelief.' The Bible is inspired in its content, its form, and its writers. It is not so much a record of inspired history as an inspired record of history. 'The writers of the Bible occupy a dimension of inspiration which can be assigned to no other writer ancient or modern. God raised up a race of men whom He specifically inspired to record, for the benefit of mankind, His special revelation in Christ Jesus.' Belief in the authority of the Old

Testament implies belief in its historical as well as its religious truth. The Bible is sufficient in itself for all matters of faith and conduct; it contains everything that is essential for man's salvation and the Christian life. Neither tradition nor the Church nor anything else has the same authority. Every part of the Scriptures is inspired and authoritative, though not to the same degree in every part. For instance, the law of Moses in Leviticus is not of the same spiritual and theological value as John's Gospel, any more than is every member of the Body of Christ of equal value with every other, though all the members are part of the Body and necessary to it. The measure of the importance of any part of the Bible is the degree to which it brings glory to God and reveals and exalts the Lord Jesus Christ. But every part of Scripture does this to some degree. 'The Bible must be respected and received and obeyed not because it is a fixed and static letter, but because under the Holy Spirit that letter is the living Word of the living God both to the individual and to the Church.'

It would appear that the most marked and positive impact all over the world to-day is being made by those branches of the Church that adopt the orthodox-evangelical approach to the Bible. Membership of Pentecostal churches in Europe and America has increased, we are informed, by leaps and bounds during the last ten years. The pace of the other branches of the Church is a mere canter in comparison.

Much interest has been created by missions, such as those of Dr. Billy Graham. The largest halls and stadiums have been packed, and the numbers of decisions for Christ, publicly taken, have been great. About the lasting influence of these missions there are varying opinions. Tom Allan, the well-known Scottish evangelist, writes: 'No religious movement made a deeper immediate impression upon the people of Britain, and I doubt very much if any has left more permanent and far-reaching results.' Statistics were published in *The British Weekly* to show that there had been an increase of ten thousand in the numbers that frequent Glasgow churches as a result of Dr. Graham's campaign in that city, and that six thousand of these were a year after still attending regularly. On the other hand, Sir Henry Self, in his address on *The Fundamentalist Heresy* from the Chair of The Modern Churchmen's Union in 1956, expressed himself thus: 'The personal charm of Dr. Graham and his sincerity are beyond question, but his appeal was ultimately to fundamentalist acceptance of the Bible and a form of Christian doctrine which has long been outgrown. By his success the prospects of getting a thinking religion accepted which could meet the developing needs



of a spiritual humanity have been set back seriously in deference to an emotional appeal having purely ephemeral results, however seemingly successful at the time.' Though thousands of Welsh people attended one or other of Dr. Graham's meetings in London in 1956, the present writer has not heard a single minister of any denomination anywhere in Wales testify that they have resulted in any increase in the membership of, or even in the numbers of, those who attend his church. In this respect the results of Dr. Graham's mission stand in marked contrast to those of the missions of Moody and Sankey at the end of last century, with nothing to aid them save their voices.

That the contemporary widespread, and widely accepted, fundamentalist movement is not without emphases that are admirable is something that should be admitted, not grudgingly or patronizingly, but willingly and with sincere gratitude. There is, for instance, its emphasis on personal commitment as something basic in the religious life. Indeed, the movement has restored three fundamental and essential emphases, namely, the need for personal and individual decision and commitment, the need for the believer to live out his creed in his own life and station, since it is only thus that he can understand the revelation of God through Christ, and the conviction that 'Christ in me' and 'I in Christ' is the one way to spiritual growth. Admirable, too, is the emphasis which the movement places on personal evangelism through public testimony and attempts to win others to Christ. Its devotees show great concern for young people when they enter university or college. They are frequently seen—school-boys and girls among them—bearing witness to their Christian faith in the open air, and in the presence of their fellow-students. Their zeal and enthusiasm are proverbial, as witness their early morning prayer and Bible-study groups. And there is a definite and positive note in their evangelizing that is praiseworthy. 'I prefer my way of doing it to your way of not doing it,' retorted Moody to one of his detractors. And who is there who will not acknowledge a measure of justice in the rebuke? Or care to deny that there is truth in this criticism of much of the Christianity called 'liberal': 'When all is said and done, more is said than done'?

Notwithstanding all this, there belong to this popular contemporary fundamentalism features that must give us pause and cause us concern. It must give rise to many perplexing questions, among which are these: (1) Does it not tend to make intellectual death the condition of spiritual life; to keep heart and mind apart; to pit faith and reason against each other; to demand a

decision for Christ which engages the emotion and the will but not the reason? Does it not in consequence fail to direct its appeal to the whole man and so do injury to the image in which man has been created? If the mind is to be stifled in favour of sudden and instantaneous decisions, may this not lead to subsequent doubt? Indeed, are there not examples of people who have accepted this approach only to abandon it later on and swing to the other extreme? If the religious impulse is stifled under the pressure of scientific reasoning, or scientific reasoning in favour of an authoritative creed, must not the result be a lowering of the general level of religious life in the land, however much fundamentalist churches should prosper in the meantime? We must heed Dr. Wheeler Robinson's oft-quoted dictum: 'Unrationalized piety is always at the mercy of fanaticism, just as undevout rationalism ceases to be religion at all.'

(2) Is the authoritarianism that is so acceptable to-day in fact a sign of basic insecurity? For the readiness to sacrifice liberty on the altar of authoritarianism is frequently, if not usually, a symptom of deep-lying insecurity. Is all this part and parcel of the flight from reason that is so prevalent to-day, because men have lost faith in reason? 'The present generation is a generation more perilously threatened by the results of unreason than any which preceded it,' wrote Sir Norman Angell in his *The Steep Places*. An expanding building becomes more and more a test of its foundations, and unless there is complete confidence in the foundations, the height and breadth of the building must be limited. Though men laud freedom, speaking generally, men fear it. Most people prefer security in confinement to risk in liberty.

(3) Does not the fundamentalist offer answers that are too ready and interpretations that are too slick to problems of conduct, and a too convenient transferring of guilt to others? Does he not also run into the danger of spiritual pride through a feeling of Divine favouritism?

(4) Does not the fundamentalist movement show an intolerance that is inconsistent with the mind of Christ and the spirit of the gospel? The present writer was told of a member of the movement who publicly informed his large congregation that he was never invited to preach at a certain town (which he named) because 'they don't want the gospel there.' A remark which seems to imply that those who minister in that town or who are invited to preach in it, preach something other than the gospel. He was also told by a colleague in the ministry that since the colleague's son joined one of the fundamentalist groups at his university, he does not appear to regard his



parents as bona fide Christians, though they have given many years of devoted service on a foreign mission field before settling down to the home ministry. Does not the Lordship of Jesus Christ imply the Lordship of His spirit also?

(5) Is it not erroneous to assume that zeal and enthusiasm are necessarily proof of correctness? Are there not among Christian Scientists and Communists and Jehovah's Witnesses people who are sincere and enthusiastic, zealous and industrious? They cannot all be correct!

(6) Is not the idolizing of the words a hindrance to the worship of the Word? 'Fanaticism obscures the centre by insisting that the circumference is equally important. In their anxiety not to empty out the baby with the bath-water they seem to pretend that the water itself is significant.' In its reaction against the sort of liberalism that undermined all the Divine authority of the Bible, has not the movement tended to take a superstitious attitude to it, 'a belief in the transubstantiation of the written word,' as it has been described?

(7) Is it sufficient to ask for a decision for Christ without at the same time asking for a decision for the Body of Christ? Is not this to neglect the Christian doctrine of the Church?

(8) If it is true to say that for the fundamentalist movement the one essential of preaching is the proclamation of the story of the Cross and of the substitutionary Atonement, can this be described as declaring the full counsel of God? Do not many of the movement's protagonists come under the condemnation of the most influential evangelist that our island has ever known, John Wesley himself, when he said, 'I find more profit in sermons on either good tempers or good works, than in what are vulgarly called gospel sermons. That term has now become a mere cant word; I wish none of our society would use it. It has no determinable meaning. Let but a pert, self-sufficient animal, that has neither sense nor grace, bawl out something about Christ, or His Blood, or justification by faith, and all his hearers cry out, "What a fine gospel sermon".'

(9) Does not the movement, in its desire to win people for Christ, forget, if not indeed ignore, other matters of importance for religion and life, such as the humanities, the importance of other theological essentials, the organic relationship of other revealed truths, the need for a Christian philosophy of the whole of life?

(10) Though the declared intention of the movement is to win men for Christ, to accept His Lordship over their lives, are they not in fact guilty of limiting His Lordship by making Him Lord of individual lives only? Has not the gospel its social and political implications? Is there no

truth in Peguy's dictum that religion begins in mysticism but ends in politics? Or in Bishop Stephen Neill's observation that we need three conversions—to Christ, to the Church, to the world in its needs? If these implications are ignored, is there not a danger that another 'church' will arise outside the Christian Church, a church whose ethic is humanitarian, whose ideals are those of the Welfare State, a church supported by industry and the State, with doctors, probation officers, personnel managers, psychologists and educationists as its priests; but a church without theology or worship? Do the Scriptures not teach that it is part of the Church's task to bear witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ over every department of life—political, cultural, artistic, industrial, etc.? 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is he who takes no offence at me.'

(11) In its popular modern form, is it not a movement that shows signs of degeneration? Has not the original concentration on the fundamentals (which is the basic meaning of fundamentalism, and in which sense every Christian worthy of the name is a fundamentalist) now degenerated into a fundamentalist heresy? Have not the convictions of the fathers become clichés on the lips of the children, and respectable curses on the tongues of the children's children to condemn all who are of a different persuasion?

I will bring my article to a close with another quotation from the address by Sir Henry Self, to which reference is made above: 'During the last eleven years the nation has been progressively recovering from the apathy following World War II, and there are increasing signs of a general spiritual revival at hand. This, however, is seriously damped down by three factors: (1) the confusion among the churches themselves as to their message for the modern age; (2) the impact of the scientific revolution and the intensity of technological development; (3) the irresponsibility of much of modern thinking. While we are all to blame for (1) we must place much of the responsibility for (3) at the doors of the contemporary fundamentalists.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I have to thank the Editor of *Diwinyddiaeth* (the organ of the Divinity Section of the Guild of Graduates of the University of Wales) for permission to make extensive use of material contributed to the 1957 Theological Conference in a paper on 'The Scriptures: The Present Position in Wales', and subsequently published in *Diwinyddiaeth*, No. VIII.



## St. Paul and the Greek World<sup>1</sup>

BY SIR EVELYN HOWELL, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., CAMBRIDGE

'ἐγενόμην τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὡς Ἰουδαῖος τοῖς ἀνόμοις ὡς ἄνομος' (1 Co 9<sup>20-21</sup>). In that context what can the last four words mean except 'as a Greek to Greeks'? St. Paul could never have staked such a claim unless he had been able to make it good, unless, that is, he was familiar with the Greek way of life and conversant with Greek literature. In an appendix I have made a collection of phrases which show that he could use and use aptly the language of the boxing ring, the law courts and the stadium, and passages from his writings are cited which show something of his debt to Plato. Everybody knows the four quotations listed in the footnote<sup>2</sup> and this paper will be an attempt to show that these four are not the whole of the evidence.

Let me begin by taking you to ch. 21 of the Acts and asking you to look at the story there told through the spectacles of one who has in his time been Military Governor of a city in the Middle East—it was Baghdad—which like Tarsus can fairly be described as 'no mean city'.

St. Paul had come back to Jerusalem from his third and last missionary journey. He had already made up his mind that having seen Athens he must also see Rome, Ac 19<sup>21</sup>—"δεῖ με καὶ Ῥώμην ἰδεῖν"—and had announced his decision in words that come ringing down through the centuries. They sound as if they had come out of a Greek play—the last half of an iambic trimeter or the first half of a trochaic line, perhaps with Rome substituted for the original key-word. He had come accompanied by a band of his followers which included some Greeks. Like a Brahmin returning to India from outside, he required purification, and for this purpose, and also no doubt to worship, he frequented the Temple. Some Jews of Asia Minor, who knew him by sight and knew what he had been doing, put it about that he had taken a Greek into the Holy Place and defiled it. A riot ensued, as it has often done and would again to-morrow in Benares or Meshed or Kerbela or in Jerusalem itself in similar circumstances. Paul was dragged out of the building and its doors were shut. His assailants meant

to kill him and that must not be done within the walls of the Temple. While they were beating him up, "φάσις ἀνέβη—a very curious and possibly significant phrase—a rumour came to the ears of" the Χιλιάρχος. Chiliarch, of course, means the O.C. of a unit a thousand strong. He must have been an officer in the Roman Army, though there is no Latin equivalent for his rank. But the designation, like so many other Roman administrative and military terms, has passed straight into Turkish, where a BİMBASHI, its exact translation, is equivalent to a Colonel. This Colonel was obviously not only in command of the local garrison, but Military Governor as well, and as such responsible for the maintenance of law and order in the city. The city was a notoriously difficult charge and he had probably been specially selected for the post. Though an officer of high rank in the Roman Army he was not a Roman by birth. His name which is on record—Claudius Lysias—shows that he was a Greek. He had had to buy Roman citizenship, perhaps while Claudius was Emperor, and as he rather ruefully says, it had cost him a lot of money (Ac 23<sup>26</sup>). His letter to the Governor of the Province reporting the case shows that he was an educated man. When he heard what was happening he took soldiers and centurions, charged the mob and rescued Paul. He obviously thought him to be a malefactor of the first importance, not only because he commanded the operation himself, but because he immediately, having secured his man, had two chains put on him. Such was the fury of the crowd that on the return journey, when the rescue party reached the flight of steps leading up to the barracks, in the Baris or Turris Antonia, the soldiers had to take Paul on their shoulders and carry him up. When they reached the top of the steps, Paul speaking in Greek said to the Chiliarch 'May I say something to you?' The Chiliarch much surprised—for he thought that his prisoner was an Egyptian thug—replied "Ἑλληνιστὶ γινώσκεις." 'What, do you know Greek?' Now mark very carefully how Paul answered this question, he said—"Ἐγὼ, ἄνθρωπος μὲν εἰμι Ἰουδαῖος Ταρσεὺς τῆς Κιλικίας, οὐκ ἀσήμερον πόλεως πολίτης."

Translate it word by word. 'I am a man.' Is this an echo of Menander's famous line, which as translated into Latin by Terence has become

<sup>1</sup> An abridged version of a paper read to the Classical Society of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, on the 15th October 1959.

<sup>2</sup> From Aratus—Ac 17<sup>28</sup>; Epimenides—Tit 1<sup>12</sup>; Menander—1 Co 15<sup>33</sup>; Pindar—Ac 9<sup>5</sup>.



part of the heritage of mankind and is at the back of the United Nations Charter?

'*Homo sum, humani nil a me alienum puto.*'<sup>1</sup>

If so, the appeal to common humanity did not work. So Paul went on: '*a Jew*'—truth compelled him to admit this, but it was not likely to cut much ice—'*of Tarsus, in Cilicia*'. That is better. Tarsus was a *πόλις*—a Greek city—the rival of Athens itself<sup>2</sup> as a centre of Greek culture, and Paul was a citizen of it, which cost Drs 500 of anybody's money. It certainly was no mean city.

'*οὐκ ἀσήμεν πόλεως πολίτης*'

In the eighth line of Euripides' *Ion* Hermes says of Athens '*ἔστιν γὰρ οὐκ ἄσμος Ἑλλήνων πόλις*'. This line, naturally enough, was very popular and no doubt well known to everybody. The missing word '*Ἑλλήνων*' must have flashed across the mental vision of Claudius Lysias and clearly established the speaker's claim to membership of the Greek world, to being a scholar and a gentleman like Claudius Lysias himself. The rest of the story is of no less interest. It discloses that Paul's father had been a citizen of credit and renown, and a liberal-minded man, from which one may perhaps infer that he had had a liberal education and had given his son one. It would be a safe bet that he was a tent-maker and had grown rich by contracts for supplying tents to the Roman Army. It also discloses that at a later hearing before the Sanhedrin Paul was able, by what we can best call adroit tactics, to win half his audience over to his side. This started a furious battle (*διεμάχοντο*), and Paul had again to be rescued and for his own safety detained in custody. A bunch of desperadoes undertook to do him in and a plot against his life was laid which was foiled by the loyalty and vigilance of his relations, an affair in which I think I can detect the hand of his sister, a respectable married lady of middle age, presumably living in Jerusalem. It also discloses that when he smuggled Paul out of the city by night Claudius Lysias thought fit to detach a very strong force—four hundred infantry and a squadron of cavalry—to ensure his safety. Finally it discloses that by appealing to Caesar before the Governor of the Province Paul secured his object—transport to Rome at the public expense—*δεῖ με καὶ Ῥώμην ἰδεῖν*.

Let us now turn to another great occasion—the speech which Paul delivered in Athens, standing where the bronze tablet now is, on the slopes of the little rocky hill called the Areopagus. He had reached Athens before Silas and Timothy, his

travelling companions, and while waiting for them in Athens, spent his time walking about the city and sightseeing (*διερχόμενος καὶ ἀναθεωρῶν*)<sup>3</sup> besides disputing in the synagogue with his co-religionists. He also went every day to the *ἀγορά* and entered into conversation with the passers-by, exactly as Socrates was accustomed to do. He thus aroused general interest and was invited to give an open lecture which seems to have been well attended. I call it an open lecture because it begins with the words '*Ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι*'. If he had been addressing the Areopagitic Council, he would have used whatever was the Athenian equivalent for '*Patres Conscripti*'.

Clearly this was the supreme occasion for the display of classical learning, if he had any. So we must look at the speech very closely. As we should expect, it begins with a compliment to the audience, a point which is entirely missed in the A.V. I have not studied all the many other translations that have been and are being made, but I reckon that my own version of the opening sentences is not far off the mark—'Men of Athens, I perceive that you are in all respects a deeply religious people. For as I went about and looked at the objects of your worship (*σεβάσματα*, an unusual word and a very tactful choice) I saw amongst others an altar dedicated to "An Unknown God". You are right to worship Him and now I declare Him to you.<sup>4</sup> He is the God who made the world and everything in it, being Himself Lord of heaven and earth. He does not inhabit temples made with hands nor is He served by men's hands, as if He were in need of anything. For it is He who gave life and breath and all that they have to all. He made all the races of mankind to be of one blood and to inhabit the whole face of the earth, and He laid down the appointed times and bounds of their habitation. He made them to seek after their Lord, if haply they might grope after Him and find Him. Indeed He is not far from each of us. For in Him we live and move and have our being as some of your poets have said. We are His offspring.'

This lofty vision of the Great Architect of the Universe, Maker of all things visible and invisible, as the Creed puts it, which is reproduced over and over again in the Koran and in the poetry of Islam, can be traced straight, or nearly straight, back to Plato. You will find one version of it near the beginning of the tenth book of the *Republic* in a passage,<sup>5</sup> which James Adam, once a scholar of Aberdeen University and sometime Fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, who was my tutor, and whose edition of the *Republic*

<sup>3</sup> Ac 17<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Or perhaps 'bring you a message from Him'.

<sup>5</sup> Plato, *Republic*, 596 C.

<sup>1</sup> Terence, *H.I.*, vii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Strabo, xiv. 673.



is still, I believe, the standard work, justly describes as of wonderful depth and fervour. Here is an extract from it:

‘Οὐ μόνον πάντα οἶός τε σκεύη ποιῆσαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἐκ τῆς γῆς φύόμενα ἅπαντα ποιεῖ καὶ ζῶα πάντα ἐργάζεται, τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ ἑαυτὸν, καὶ πρὸς τοῦτοις γῆν καὶ οὐρανὸν καὶ θεοὺς καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν οὐρανῷ.’

‘For this same artificer is able not only to make all kinds of inanimate objects. He also makes everything which grows out of the ground and animates all living things, Himself included, and besides these and the earth and heaven and the gods and all that is in heaven above and in the underworld.’<sup>1</sup>

There is another echo of Plato<sup>2</sup> in the speech, the strange word ‘ψηλαφήσειαν’ ‘grope after’. It is used by Plato in the *Phaedo* exactly in the same sense, with especial reference to the early philosophers and their speculations as to the origin of matter and of man.

Before we go further in search of classical allusions and quotations in this speech let us finish with Paul’s debt to Plato. In the appendix parallel passages from Plato and from Paul are cited which show that the conception of the world of Reality, of which this world of phenomena is a transient shadow, of the Heavenly City of which we are all citizens, of the Inner Man, equated by both Plato and Paul with νοῦς (Reason), who is, or should be, in control of all our actions, all derive from Plato and are reproduced by Paul. I think I can even catch a reflection here and there of Plato’s literary style in Paul’s epistles. Even those periodical discharges of a cataract of nouns and adjectives denoting moral qualities, of which Paul is so fond, are not without a milder Platonic precedent.<sup>3</sup>

We now pass to a region very different from that *ὑπερουράνιος τόπος* where Plato dwells serene. Six hundred years or so before Paul’s speech was delivered another great man had stood in the very place where he was now standing. His name was Epimenides and he was a Cretan. A good deal of legend has gathered about him, but he was an historical person, a poet and something of a priest. St. Paul himself calls him a *προφήτης*<sup>4</sup> and so does Clement of Alexandria. The Athenians at a very early date had invoked his services to purge them of blood guilt, that is in effect to reconcile them with their gods. This service he

performed to their satisfaction and his name was ever after greatly revered in Athens. Rendel Harris, to whom I gratefully record my indebtedness, browsing in a voluminous commentary in Syriac on the Nestorian Lectionary called the *Gannat Busamé* or *Garden of Delight*, chanced upon the following passage, almost certainly an extract from the works of a man called Theodore of Mopsuestia who, though suspected of heresy, was esteemed as the most learned of the Nestorian Fathers.

‘Ac 17<sup>28</sup>. “In him we live, and move, and have our being.” The Cretans used to say of Zeus that he was a prince and that he was ripped up by a wild boar and he was buried; and lo! his grave is with us. Accordingly Minos, the son of Zeus, made over him a panegyric and in it he said: “A grave they have fashioned for Thee, O holy and high one, the lying Cretans, who are all the time liars and beasts, idle bellies, but Thou diest not, for to eternity Thou livest and standest, for in Thee we live and move and have our being.”’

A later Nestorian Father named Isho’dad in his commentary on the same passage definitely affirms that ‘the blessed Paul took this out of Minos’. Minos was the chief character in an epic attributed to Epimenides and the poem was known by his name as the Minos. Rendel Harris rightly assumes that the quotation reproduced in Theodore’s note was from this poem. He and other scholars have reconstructed the lines. Here is Harris’ version—‘*Τύμβον ἐτεχνήναντο σέθεν, κῦδιστε, μέγιστε, Κρήτες, αἰεὶ ψεῦδσαι, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί, ἀλλὰ γὰρ οὐ σὺ θάνες, ζωεῖς δε καὶ ἴστασαι αἰέν. Ἐν γὰρ σοι ζῶμεν καὶ κινύμεο ἡδέ καὶ ἐσμέν.*’

It seems certain that there was a quotation here from Epimenides, perhaps as reshaped by Callimachus. But whatever its exact form may have been, it is clear that the words ‘as certain of your own poets have said’ refer to it and not to the tag from Aratus which follows. That is merely the sum of what has gone before. You will also not have failed to notice that the passage cited refers to a god falsely asserted to be dead, but who was really alive. The relevance of this to what follows in the later part of Paul’s speech gives it a claim, I think, to be regarded as one of the aptest quotations on record.

Let us take another look at the scene which confronted Paul as he spoke. The great statue of Agrippa recently set up before the Propylea must have been staring him in the face. Behind it above Propylea towered the colossal figure of Athene Promachos with the sunlight glinting on her helmet and spear and shield. And beyond and above all was the miracle of the Parthenon. The sight of such things, as we know, made him

<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Republic*, 596 C; 1 Co 12<sup>6</sup> (θεός, ὁ ἐνεργῶν τὰ πάντα ἐν πάνιν).

<sup>2</sup> *Phaedo*, 99 B.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., Plato—*Republic*, 490 C; *Phaedo*, 114 E. Paul—Ro 12<sup>9-13</sup> 13<sup>13</sup>, 2 Co 6<sup>8-8</sup> 12<sup>20,21</sup>, Gal 5<sup>19-23</sup>, Eph 5<sup>3-5</sup>, Col 3<sup>5-12</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Tit 1<sup>12</sup>.



angry (Ac 17<sup>16</sup>). But on this occasion he did not give vent to his wrath. On the contrary he employed an unusual and almost respectful word to describe what he saw, *σεβάσματα*—objects of worship. *σέβας* was the very feeling that he was seeking to arouse in his hearers. It was a feeling that clung to the place where he stood. To an Athenian it was holy ground. Is it not a remarkable coincidence that in the great speech in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*,<sup>1</sup> in which Athene tells how the Areopagitic court which sat there came to be divinely instituted, the word *σέβας* or *σέβειν* is repeated five times in thirty-five lines and recurs again thereafter?

There are other grounds for thinking that Paul had read the *Eumenides*. In the closing scene, which nobody who has ever seen it acted will ever forget, the word *χαίρετε* is bandied to and fro between the participants and finally the Chorus Leader says:

‘Χαίρετε, χαίρετε δ’ αὖθις ἐπανδιπλοῖζω  
πάντες οἱ κατὰ πτόλιν.’

The word *ἐπανδιπλοῖζω* (of which the exact form is questioned) occurs only here. It probably sounded strange even to Aeschylus' audience. So when Paul in the Epistle to the Philippians (3<sup>1</sup> and 4<sup>4</sup>) has the same message to convey, he says:

‘χαίρετε ἐν Κυρίῳ . . . χαίρετε ἐν Κυρίῳ πάντοτε,  
πάνιν ἔρῳ χαίρετε.’

Surely this *ἐπανδιπλοῖζω* *πάνιν ἔρῳ* is an echo.

After Aeschylus Pindar. There is not much here, but one tiny fragment of Pindar preserved by Strabo (vi. 268). ‘*ξύνες ὁ τοι λέγω*’ may be reflected in Paul's injunction to Timothy (2 Ti 2<sup>7</sup>), ‘*νόει ὁ λέγω δὴ γάρ σοι ὁ Κύριος σύνεσιν ἐν πᾶσιν*.’

Pindar also uses the famous phrase ‘to kick against the pricks’ (*πρὸς κέντρα λακτιζειν*). Aeschylus and Euripides use it too. But I do not attach any significance to it. In the form ‘recalcitrant’ it has found its way through Latin even into our own language, and is so natural and in such common use in all communities where oxen are used for ploughing, or to draw carts, that it counts for nothing.

So far we have been dealing with passages in which there is no doubt what Paul said or wrote. There are other passages in which there can be no such certainty. For example in the Epistle to the Colossians (2<sup>18</sup>) there is a passage in which it is doubtful whether a negative should be read or omitted. Translators have struggled and tortured the Greek to make sense of it without much success. By a brilliant emendation, which Hort

<sup>1</sup> *Eumenides*, 650 ff.

and Lightfoot of the R.V. were disposed to accept for the *textus receptus* ‘*ἀ (μὴ) ἔωρακεν ἐμβατεύων*’ scholars<sup>2</sup> have suggested *ἀέρα* (or perhaps *αἰώραν*) *κενεμβατευων*, *αἰώρα* is a technical term of the theatre for the *machina* on which the *deus* appeared and is used in that sense in the *Phaedo*.<sup>3</sup> ‘*κενεμβατευων*’ is a not uncommon word for ‘treading on air’. The whole passage would then reflect the line in Aristophanes' *Clouds* in which Socrates, seen suspended in a basket, when asked what he is doing, replies:

‘*ἀεροβατῶ καὶ περιφρονῶ τὸν ἥλιον*’<sup>4</sup>

Socrates<sup>5</sup> in his defence alluded to this scene and Rendel Harris justly observes that nothing in all Greek drama was better known. In this Epistle Paul was warning his followers against sophistical teaching and, since Aristophanes had unjustly pilloried Socrates as a typical sophist, the whole thing would fit in very well. Rendel Harris<sup>6</sup> makes great play with it, but his argument is technical and lengthy.

I will make an end by posing a moral problem. Paul's speech, as we are told, evoked only ridicule and indifference. Suppose that he had had a success-effect on his hearers, that they had become excited and that somebody had shouted—pointing to the works of Pheidias—‘There they are. They are idols of false gods. They have misled us for generations and so long as they stand where they are, they will continue to mislead. Let us go and smash them to smithereens.’ If you had been there, (1) What would you have done? and (2) What should you have done?

### Greek References

The Boxing Ring. οὕτως πυκτεύω ὡς οὐκ ἀέρα δέρων (1 Co 9<sup>27</sup>).

The Law Courts. ἐξαλείψας τὸ καθ' ἡμῶν χειρόγραφον (Col 2<sup>14</sup>).

Race Track and Stadium. καταβραβεύετώ (Col 2<sup>18</sup>).

πάντες μὲν τρέχουσιν, εἰς δὲ λαμβάνει τὸ βραβεῖον (1 Co 9<sup>24</sup>).

ἀγωνίζου τὸν καλὸν ἀγῶνα<sup>7</sup> (1 Ti 6<sup>12</sup>).

τὸν καλὸν ἀγῶνα ἡγωνίσμαι, τὸν δρόμον τετέλεκα (2 Ti 4<sup>7</sup>).

<sup>2</sup> Alex Moore and Courcelles.

<sup>3</sup> III E.

<sup>4</sup> Aristophanes, *Nubes*, 225.

<sup>5</sup> Plato, *Apology*, 19 C.

<sup>6</sup> See Woodbrooke *Essays*, No. 7.

<sup>7</sup> ἀγών equals an event in the arena or stadium, not a battle.



## Plato

## The Heavenly City

Μανθάνω, ἔφη. ἐν ᾗ νῦν διήλθομεν οἰκίζοντες πόλει λέγεις, τῇ ἐν λόγοις κειμ-ἐνη ἐπεὶ γῆς γε οὐδαμοῦ οἶμαι αὐτὴν εἶναι.

Ἄλλ', ἦν δ' ἐγώ, ἐν οὐρανῷ ἴσως παράδειγμα ἀνάκειται τῷ βουλομένῳ ὄραν καὶ ὁρῶντι ἑαυτὸν κατοικίζειν (*Republic*, 592 A and B).

ἡμῶν γὰρ το πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχει (Ph 3<sup>20</sup>).

## The Inner Man

ὁθεν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὁ ἐντὸς ἄνθρωπος ἔσται ἐγκρατέστατος, καὶ τοῦ πολυκεφάλου θρέμματος ἐπιμελήσεται (*Republic*, 589 A).

συνήδομαι γὰρ τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον. βλέπω δε ἕτερον νόμον ἐν τοῖς μέλεσί μου, ἀντιστρατεύμενον τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ νοός μου (Ro 7<sup>22, 23</sup>).

ἵνα δῶῃ ὑμῖν . . . δυνάμει κραταιωθῆναι διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον κατοικῆσαι τὸν Χριστὸν . . . (Eph 3<sup>16, 17</sup>).

ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ ὁ ἔξω ἄνθρωπος διαφθείρεται, ἀλλ' ὁ ἔσωθεν ἀνακαινοῦται . . . (2 Co 4<sup>16</sup>).

## Reality

μιγαῖς τῷ ὄντι ὄντως . . . γνοίῃ τε καὶ ἀληθῶς ζῶ . . . καὶ οὕτω λήγοι ὠδίνος (*Republic*, 490 B).

πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις συνστενάζει καὶ συνωδίνει ἄχρι τοῦ νῦν (Ro 8<sup>22</sup>).

παράγει γὰρ τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου (1 Co 7<sup>31</sup>).

τὰ γὰρ βλεπόμενα πρόσκαιρα τὰ δὲ μὴ βλεπόμενα αἰώνια (2 Co 4<sup>18</sup>).

## Literature

## CHRISTIANITY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

THE World Council of Churches summoned a world conference of Church historians to meet at Geneva in the summers of 1956 and 1959, to consider a more ecumenical presentation of Church History. On both occasions American Protestants, Eastern Orthodox, and those belonging to Church traditions both geographically and ecclesiastically in between, confessed to neglect and ignorance of one another's history. We might well have borrowed, as true of all European lands, Latourette's sentences about Church History in Germany: 'Protestantism elsewhere in Europe was regarded as peripheral, and almost nothing was said of Christianity as it was developing in the Americas, of the planting of the Faith in Australia, Africa south of the Sahara, and Asia. In other words, the perspective was distinctly provincial' (p. 59). This new book—*Christianity in a Revolutionary Age*, vol. II. *The Nineteenth Century in Europe: The Protestant and Eastern*

*Churches*, by Professor Kenneth Scott Latourette (Eyre and Spottiswoode; 63s. net)—does more than remind us of neglect. It contributes handsomely towards repair of our omissions.

The scene opens with Germany, in the period from the disappearance of the Holy Roman Empire, 1806, to the eve of the First World War—a revolutionary age indeed! The importance of this nineteenth century we shall better gauge if we turn from political revolution to creative theological thought. In Germany it is the period from Schleiermacher to Karl Barth, and in Scandinavia, where our neglect is even greater, from Kierkegaard to Nathan Söderblom.

The assignment of space to so many churches of so many countries must have raised many problems, but it is judiciously done: a hundred and forty pages to Germany, forty to Scandinavia, a hundred and seventy-five to the British Isles, several to each smaller European country where Protestants are found, and sixty to Russia and the Balkans—which last is the somewhat narrow meaning of 'Eastern Churches' in the sub-title.



Similarly, his allocations of space to Communions within one country will bear examination. For example, in Britain the Church of England has fifty-eight pages, Methodists, Congregationalists, and Baptist six to seven each. Scots Presbyterians have twenty, almost as much as all English Non-conformity together. Yet this is explained as due to their influence as a national Church and to their eminence in scholarship.

The whole survey is efficient, revealing immense industry through these years of the author's supposed retirement. K. S. Latourette, however, brings to his task not only the habits of his well-disciplined life, but also friendships made in long years of ecumenical service. An acknowledgment of indebtedness at the beginning of the volume lets us into this secret. Each area has had its native expert to advise: Martin Schmidt for Germany, Einer Molland for Norway, H. G. Wood for the English Free Churches, Hugh Watt for Scotland, and so on—names that any wise author might have chosen, but all old associates of his. Even so the achievement is surprising, for in almost every case he moves with that confident approach and sure tread which, if the section stood alone, instead of being part of a continental survey (and that a part of a *world* survey), would lead the reader to say, 'No outsider this, but one who writes from within'. This is less true of the last sections. The Orthodox East through the Ecumenical Movement we are coming to know in part, but for nearly half-a-century there have been no direct contacts with Russian Church life, and though many of us, like Latourette, owe much to such interpreters as Madame Gorodetzky and Nicolas Zernov, it is harder to feel at home.

It is a great thing to be given an acquaintance with contemporary movements over a whole continent. A final half-page chapter, 'Preparation for Geographic Transition', prepares us for horizons wider yet: 'The religion which at the outset of the nineteenth century had a large majority of its adherents in that peninsular extension of Eurasia that we call Europe, and which to many appeared to be approaching its death from the revolution in whose origin it had shared, was displaying renewed and amazing vigour, was expanding geographically as had no other religion, and was impinging upon all the human race'.

The great theme of the Great Century is the expansion of Christianity.

JOHN FOSTER

#### AN EPOCH-MAKING SURVEY

'The lessons of history clearly demonstrate that the training of the clergy is at the core of the

process of maintaining any ecclesiastical organization.' These words are not culled from the report of a conference of theologians. They are the deliberate conviction of a distinguished American business executive, Mr. Yorke Allen, Jr., who has brought to triumphant conclusion the labour of many months designed to demonstrate the importance of training a Christian ministry able to meet the demands of the present age. *A Seminary Survey* (Harper, New York; \$10.00) is the most thorough and comprehensive account, yet published, of theological education in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

The work began as the attempt to provide the late Mr. J. D. Rockefeller, Jr., with facts to support the appeal of the International Missionary Council for funds to implement the recommendations of its surveys on the training of the ministry in the 'younger churches'. The finished work makes it quite clear that in the course of relentless searching personal interest soon overtook professional skill. Quite apart from the immediate result of the Survey in the establishment of the Theological Education Fund of the I.M.C., the Christian world is debtor to Mr. Yorke Allen for a superb factual review of great significance for the strategy of the world mission of the Church.

Part I. deals with the Protestant Seminaries, of all types and grades, beginning with a forthright account of the structure of missions. 'It is against this background of a fragmented Protestant missionary effort, annually spending large sums of money in countries where nationalism is seething and Communism is on the march that one may appraise the effort being made to train the future ministers of the younger churches.' Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, South East Asia, East Asia, and Latin America are dealt with *seriatim*. In each case there is a sketch of general background, with significant detail, before each Seminary is described. Mr. Yorke Allen shows great skill in his use of documents and personal contacts, and even greater wisdom in interpreting material. He has found some information hard to get and is aware that there may be gaps and inaccuracies. So far as the reviewer can test reading by knowledge, these seem very few and slight indeed. We can but marvel at the way in which material has been selected and organized. Understanding is helped by seven maps and no less than a hundred and eighty-six Tables which, for once, illuminate and do not darken counsel.

In Part II. there is an account of the missionary enterprise and seminaries of the Roman Catholic Church in the same areas. Here, Mr. Yorke Allen is deliberately breaking new ground in the hope that Protestants will pay as much attention to the work and strategy of the Roman Catholics as



they do to ours. Part III. contains a shorter, but no less valuable, account of the Eastern Churches in Africa and Asia.

In Part IV. the Survey returns to the Protestant world to reach conclusions and make recommendations. In the account of support given to theological education there is an ominous separation between theory and practice. Significant quotations from official pronouncements show how heavy is the stress laid by Mission Boards on the importance of this aspect of the life of the churches. Then the facts disclose that the eight principal American Boards spend less than six per cent. of income under this head. The British Societies apparently use just over one per cent., but we suspect that account has not been taken, in reaching this figure, of the provision of the services of missionaries. Even so, the disparity between policy and action is sufficiently shameful. Seven reasons are adduced in part explanation of the plight of theological education as 'step-child or orphan of the Christian world mission'. Mr. Yorke Allen singles out for special concern the poverty of libraries and the paucity of text-books.

As to the recommendations—are they not written in the rapidly expanding programme of the Theological Education Fund which is the first far-reaching result of this Society? This is one story with a happy ending. It would be a pity, however, merely to rate this book in terms of that to which it has given effect. In its own right it is a notable achievement and a valuable addition to the source materials of the Church historian and missionary apologist.

MARCUS WARD

#### ECUMENICAL DEBATE

The second volume of Professor T. F. Torrance's *Conflict and Agreement in the Church* has been issued by the Lutterworth Press at 35s. net. The sub-title is *The Ministry and the Sacraments of the Gospel*. Much of the material here presented has appeared in learned journals on the Continent and in America as well as in these islands, and tribute is due to author and publishers alike for making it more readily accessible.

Dealing with matters which obviously divide the main Church traditions, this book avoids all that is deliberately polemical. There are valuable discussions of the doctrine of ordination and of the distinctions between the propitiatory and the eucharistic sacrifice and between true and false ways of speaking of the latter. From the thorough exposition of the Eucharist it is deduced that intercommunion should come early in the approach of the churches to full unity. All through Dr. Torrance sees the Church in both the horizontal

and the vertical planes. For instance, valid ordination to ministry in the Church must, on the one hand, be ordination by Christ the living Lord; but on the other hand valid ordination concerns the responsible transmission of authorization by a Church in history. Similarly in the Eucharist we have the real presence of the living Lord to-day, but this boon becomes ours within the ongoing historical Church, which is set in history between the Resurrection and the Second Advent. This book is important as an exposition of Reformed doctrine and as a contribution to ecumenical conversation and understanding.

STEWART MECHIE

#### PHILIPPIANS

The latest volume to emerge in the 'Tyndale New Testament Commentaries' is *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians: An Introduction and Commentary*, by the Rev. Ralph P. Martin, B.A. (Tyndale Press; 8s. 6d. net), and we think that this volume is quite the best volume in a series whose level is consistently high.

Mr. Martin has a long and careful Introduction dealing with the critical problems. He has an excellent summary of the material regarding the date and place of composition of the letter. The arguments for Caesarea, for Rome, and for Ephesus are clearly and lucidly stated, and in the end Mr. Martin leaves it an open question whether the letter was written from Ephesus in the winter of A.D. 54-55, or from Rome in the early part of A.D. 63.

He explains the apparent break in the unity of the letter at 3<sup>1</sup> by the assumption that, when Paul was just about to conclude his letter, new and stirring news arrived about the state of things at Philippi, whereupon Paul turned aside 'to dictate a vehement warning'.

He discusses in full the problems of 2<sup>5-11</sup> and thinks it most probable that these verses are a hymn quotation 'which Paul is making to support his appeal to the Philippians,' what A. M. Hunter calls "a purple patch" stitched into the fabric of the exhortation'. There is an excellent extended note in the Introduction on the meaning and usage of *koinōnia*.

The commentary itself is uniformly helpful. Mr. Martin quotes the Feine-Behm verdict on Philippians: 'The letter breathes warmth and cordiality; its key-note is joy'. This volume both in its bibliography and in its full footnotes gives ample evidence of careful scholarship. We may label this series as conservative, but this is most intelligent conservatism. We think that the warmth of this letter created a warmth in the heart of Mr. Martin as he worked on this book for



it is certainly written *con amore*. For the reader who cannot work from the Greek text there is no better commentary on Philippians than this volume, short as it is.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

### THE MAKING OF A MISSIONARY

A generation ago a missionary volunteer might have felt himself sufficiently equipped for his life's work in a foreign land if he had the call of God in his heart and some skill of head or hand. Not so to-day. The initial pioneering has been done, churches, hospitals, colleges and schools built, and staff trained. Nowadays the expatriate missionary goes to co-operate with the local Church in the task of Christian witness and service. Such a call needs great grace and genuine humility. To explain what a Christian needs to do to fit himself or herself for work overseas to-day is the aim of *The Making of a Missionary*, by the Rev. Douglas N. Sargent (Hodder and Stoughton; 4s. 6d. net).

The author has had many years of service in China, before, during, and after the War. His book is full of wise and godly counsel. 'You must not let anybody go overseas who has not come to an end of himself', he warns, and there is much here about the missionary's inner life, his attitude to colleagues and people, and the intolerable strain of being 'ultra-conscientious'. It is often gratitude for which our hearts most earnestly crave, and that very craving destroys the hope of saintliness, for it is in essence an avoiding of the Cross. In the final analysis it is saints that are needed as missionaries—saints in the New Testament sense of the word as meaning those who have been set apart for God's service, and saints also in the way the word is more commonly used as meaning men who are truly Christ-like in all the daily intercourse of life. It is saints that the world, however reluctantly, really wants to meet.

Undoubtedly this is a book to put into the hands of young people. It will search the motives of their hearts, and yet face them with challenge and a deep sense of the real call of God.

DONALD M. MCFARLAN

✓ Thirty years ago a small book was written by Dr. Vincent Taylor and published by the Epworth Press, entitled *The Gospels: A Short Introduction*. In small compass (only a hundred and twenty-eight pages) it offered the student as clear, concise, and at the same time as comprehensive an introduction to the Gospels as one could desire. It quickly came to be recognized as the ideal textbook, and it is a measure of the solid worth of

this slender volume that, on the average, a new edition has been called for every three years, and still the demand continues. The ninth edition has just been issued (6s. 6d. net). It is substantially the same book as that which was first printed in 1930, and it is a testimony to the shrewd judgment of the author that only a very few alterations have been required as a result of developments in the intervening years.

This latest edition does, however, contain some additional material as compared with the first one: there is a little more on the form-critical approach to St. Mark, on recent contributions affecting the so-called 'Q' document, an added note on Proto-Luke, a considered assessment of Gardner-Smith's contention that the Fourth Gospel was written in complete independence of the Synoptics. There is also a valuable note on the Historical Value of the Fourth Gospel. A number of extra footnotes amplify, in the light of recent scholarship, points made already in the text.

The present book is therefore slightly enlarged compared with the first edition, but the publishers have re-set the type in such a way that the number of pages is actually reduced (to a hundred and twelve) and the material, in certain cases, set out more impressively.

Many teachers, accustomed to recommend this very useful little book, will be glad to know that it is not in danger of going out of print; and if there are students who do not yet know of this admirable aid to study, they are recommended to obtain a copy of this very welcome ninth edition. We congratulate Dr. Taylor on having served so many generations of students through this, one of his earliest writings.

A warm welcome is accorded to a new theological quarterly which is designed to serve churches from Burma to Formosa, including Malaya and the East Indies. The articles are all in English, and the Journal is called *The South East Asia Journal of Theology*. The Journal is obtainable from 6 Mount Sophia, Singapore 9 (10s. 6d. net or U.S. \$1.50 per annum). It is of a good scholarly standard, and the first issue contains articles by Christoph Barth (on 'Recent Trends in O.T. Interpretation'), by Frank Balchin (on 'Recent Trends in N.T. Interpretation'), as well as a number of shorter articles on a variety of subjects. Some of these are devoted to questions of special concern to Christians in the area the Journal serves, such as a poem in *vers libre* inspired by the plight of the refugees in Hongkong, an article on the Resurrection Chapel at Makassar, one on the Nommensen University in Pematang Siantar, and one on 'Javanism' and its Scriptures. There are a



number of good book reviews on books such as Alan Richardson's *Introduction to the Theology of the N.T.*, Noth's *History of Israel*, Johnson's *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel*, Jacob's *Theology of the O.T.*, and Grollenberg's *Atlas of the Bible*. The Journal is well printed on good paper, and if the standard of the first number is maintained, it should have a circulation beyond the constituency for which it is primarily designed.

Bishop J. W. C. Wand has written a Pelican Book with the title, *The Church Today*, and it has recently been published (Penguin Books) at 3s. 6d. net. His aim has been to describe the Church in its external variety and its inner unity. To that end he begins with *The Church in Society*, takes next *The Constitution of the Church*, then *The Soul of the Church*, and concludes with four special questions—*The Relation of the Church to History*, *The Origins of the Ministry*, *Tradition*, and *The Way of Salvation*.

This is the Church as seen by a scholarly Anglican well versed both in history and theology. The ecumenical temper is here, and so is an admirably clear literary style. We trust this book will have many readers both within the churches and beyond their borders. There is instruction here for all.

The latest volume to emerge in 'The Seekers' Library' is *I Believe*, by Professor G. W. H. Lampe, D.D. (Skeffington; 18s. net).

Dr. Lampe makes no attempt, very wisely, to set out an account of what the various kinds of Christians have believed. He has sought, on the basis of the Creed, to state positively what he himself believes. He is well aware that his belief is conditioned by the theology of his own communion; and, he says, 'this volume is written from the standpoint of one whose understanding of Christianity is determined in the main by the historic creeds and the Anglican Prayer Book'.

The book has eleven chapters—I Believe, In One God, The Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth; In One Lord Jesus Christ; In the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; For us Men; And for our Salvation; For the Remission of Sins; One Catholic and Apostolic Church, Whose Kingdom shall have no End; The Life of the World to come. It can be seen that the faith is comprehensively covered. At a first reading this book seems to be diffuse and repetitive, but on second thoughts that is a virtue rather than a fault, for it takes time to make its points and it secures them by reiteration. The reader is certainly not hurried along but is given time to think. From that point of view the method is good.

Finally, we think that this book is better adapted to the person who knows the Faith

already, and who desires deeper and more intelligent knowledge of it, than it is to the person outside the Church. It is not so much a book for the seeker as for those who at least to some extent have already found.

Another volume of the 'Studies in Ministry and Worship' issued by the S.C.M. Press at 7s. 6d. net has come to hand. It is by Professor H. B. Porter of Wisconsin and, under the title *The Day of Light*, its scope is described as 'The Biblical and Liturgical Meaning of Sunday'. The familiar problems about Sabbath Observance are scarcely mentioned. What are in view are prior questions as to the meaning of the day; and the general conclusion, argued on a basis of theology and history, is that it is one of those fundamental Christian institutions through which the Christian message is communicated and by which Christ moulds the lives of His people.

The latest volume in 'The Torch Bible Commentaries' (S.C.M.; 10s. 6d. net) deals with *The Epistles to Timothy, Titus and Philemon* and is written by Mr. A. R. C. Leaney, M.A., B.D., a lecturer at Nottingham University and author of a recent Commentary on St. Luke. Mr. Leaney is a little non-committal on matters of introduction, though he seems to favour Harrison's theory of the origin of the Pastoral Epistles, finding genuine pieces of Paul's letters embedded in what is largely post-Pauline material. It is these fragments of genuine letters which justify the inclusion of the Pastoral Epistles in the same volume as Philemon, an undoubtedly authentic letter of the Apostle. Mr. Leaney does not refer to the interesting and illuminating work of E. J. Goodspeed and John Knox on the origin of Philemon and the purpose of the Pastoral Epistles. This may be due to the need for brevity, demanded by the series, which also occasionally leaves the reader with a sense of incompleteness in treatment. But within the limits of space imposed by the series, and as a book addressed to the 'general reader' rather than the scholar, it makes a worthy contribution to a series which has already proved its great value and usefulness.

*Luther's Principles of Biblical Interpretation*, by the Rev. A. Skevington Wood, Ph.D., F.R.Hist.S. (Tyndale Press; 1s. 6d. net), is a well documented historical study of a matter which was fundamental in the controversies of the Reformation age. Students of Luther will welcome this elucidation of his position. Many other readers may come to believe with the author that Luther's contribution in this sphere has relevance to contemporary issues and is indeed of permanent value.



# Modern Issues in Biblical Studies

## The Provenance of the Fourth Gospel

BY PRINCIPAL C. LESLIE MITTON, B.D., M.Th., Ph.D., HANDSWORTH COLLEGE, BIRMINGHAM

IN recent years there has been a considerable change in the opinions of scholars regarding certain aspects of the Fourth Gospel. Thirty years ago, though many problems remained unsolved, a kind of current orthodoxy had come to be widely accepted concerning, for instance, the date of the Fourth Gospel, the area where it originated, and, in general, its relationship to the other three Gospels. It was agreed that the writer was acquainted with them, at any rate with Mark and Luke, and for this reason, if for no other, its date must be fixed at some time later than that of the publication of Luke, and so was placed right at the end of the first century, or else in the early years of the second. This late date was felt to be required also by the 'advanced' theological thought of the Gospel. Moreover some of the features which distinguished the Fourth Gospel from the others were characterized as 'Hellenistic', and to account for this it was assumed that the place of its origin must have been in some centre of Greek culture, such as Ephesus, where tradition firmly insisted that this Gospel came into being.

It may very well be that this general point of view is still the one which best explains the available evidence, but it must be conceded that each of these 'conclusions' has recently been sharply challenged by competent scholars, and good reasons given for re-examining their validity.

For instance, it is by no means so clear as was once thought that the Fourth Evangelist did in fact know any one of the Synoptic Gospels. If he did not, one of the main arguments in favour of a late date is removed. Moreover recent discoveries in Palestine have shown that the features in this Gospel which were ascribed to Hellenistic influence can be paralleled in other writings completely *within* the life of Judaism about the middle of the first century A.D. and even before. Is it possible, therefore, it is asked, that this Gospel not only had its origin in the life of Judaism in Palestine, but should also be dated before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70?

The purpose of this article is to notice some of the evidence which has been claimed to suggest an affirmative answer to these questions.

In 1938 an unpretentious little book slipped almost unnoticed into publication. Perhaps the

international upheavals of the time robbed it of the attention it deserved. It has, however, proved to be a significant and influential book. Its title was: *St. John and the Synoptic Gospels*, and its author P. Gardner-Smith. Its chief aim was to show how slender were the grounds on which it had been assumed that John knew the other Gospels. This common opinion relied on a few short phrases of similar or identical words to be found in both Mark and John, especially in the stories of the Feeding of the Multitude and of the Anointing of Jesus, and on a few features of the story of Jesus which John had in common with Luke, such as the place of Martha and Mary among the followers of Jesus, and the influence of Annas during His Trial.

Gardner-Smith emphasized how slight and trivial these few similarities were compared with the immense, unexplained dissimilarities between the material in the Fourth Gospel and that in the other three. The small similarities could be explained as common elements in what was otherwise a divergent oral tradition, without requiring the assumption of any kind of literary dependence. Moreover some of these similarities may have found their way into John, at a very early date, through the process of assimilation, one of the commonest faults of copyists, by which phrases from one Gospel are inadvertently introduced into a similar context in a different Gospel. With very telling arguments Gardner-Smith insisted that the similarities and dissimilarities were much more easily accounted for on the assumption that John did not in fact know any one of the other three Gospels.

Slowly over the years his arguments have won their way, and prominent scholars have come to acknowledge their force. In 1943, for instance, Dr. W. F. Howard, an eminent Johannine scholar and himself the author of two standard books on the Fourth Gospel,<sup>1</sup> although previously he had accepted the point of view which Gardner-Smith criticised, admitted that he was having to reconsider his earlier opinion in the light of Gardner-Smith's book. He wrote: 'I am almost persuaded by the author's cumulative argument'.<sup>2</sup> Similarly

<sup>1</sup> *The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation and Christianity according to St. John.*

<sup>2</sup> *Christianity according to St. John*, 17.



Professor C. H. Dodd in his own very important treatise, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* [1953], wrote of Gardner-Smith's book that it 'shows how fragile are the arguments by which the dependence of John on the other Gospels has been "proved"'. A little later also in *New Testament Studies*, II. No. 2, Professor Dodd examined in detail four sayings of Jesus recorded in the Fourth Gospel which appear also in somewhat different form in the Synoptics, and which have sometimes been cited as evidence that John borrowed from them. His firm conclusion was that these sayings reached John, not via the Synoptic Gospels, but 'through an independent channel'.

In 1954 there was published in German a book by Bent Noack entitled *Zur Johanneischen Tradition*. In it the author maintained not only that the Fourth Gospel is entirely independent of all other written sources, but also that the Gospel is in fact a collection of oral teachings, as it was given in some centre of Christian life completely unfamiliar with the other form of the tradition preserved to us in the Synoptic Gospels. This oral teaching was being committed to writing for the first time in the writing of the Fourth Gospel. The repeated emphasis on 'writing' in the two closing verses of the Gospel is claimed as evidence for this. Also several features of the Gospel are argued to be characteristic of spoken rather than literary Greek, for example, the use of parataxis in narrative passages and asyndeton in the dialogues.

All these pieces of evidence suggest that the Fourth Gospel was written at a time before the Synoptic Gospels had been published long enough for them to become widely known in the life of the Church. One would think that this could hardly be much later than A.D. 90. Moreover there is further evidence from papyrus remains which points in the same direction. The Rylands papyrus, containing some verses from Jn 18, is confidently dated by experts before A.D. 150. The Egerton papyrus of similar date is a fragment of a composite narrative consisting of elements derived from all four Gospels, and including items from the Fourth Gospel. Both these pages of papyrus come from Egypt. If we allow for the time needed after the writing of the Fourth Gospel for it to become recognized as worthy of being copied, and then to find its way to Egypt, and, in the case of the Egerton papyrus, to be combined with other material to form a single narrative, the date of the writing of the Gospel must be a long time before the date of these two papyri.

Professor W. F. Albright has also made significant contributions about the provenance of the Fourth Gospel. His primary interest is in the

archaeology of Palestine and Semitic studies in general, but he has brought this specialist knowledge to bear upon the New Testament, and particularly upon the problems associated with the Fourth Gospel. He emphatically insists that none of the so-called Hellenistic features of the Gospel need have come from lands outside Palestine. There were already to be found in Palestine in the first century unorthodox groups *within Judaism* who customarily used these same modes of thought and expression, which in John we have been accustomed to assign to Greek influences. This had been already recognized by scholars before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran, but was confirmed by the literature of this unorthodox community of devout Jews. Professor Albright had already made this point strongly in his Pelican book on *The Archaeology of Palestine* (pp. 238-249), and he deals with the same subject more precisely in his article entitled 'Discoveries in Palestine and the Gospel of St. John', contributed to *The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology*. He there gives grounds for believing that this Gospel took shape orally in Palestine before A.D. 70, was then, after the fall of Jerusalem, transmitted as oral teaching in some Christian centre in the Diaspora, and then after a time there committed to writing, probably before rather than after A.D. 90.

Professor H. H. Rowley in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament* gives a measure of cautious confirmation of this opinion of the existence of some similarities between the Fourth Gospel and the literature from Qumran. He agrees that 'there are many links of word and phrase between the Scrolls and the New Testament', and that 'these are especially observed in the Fourth Gospel' (p. 27). He continues: 'It seems to us probable that Albright is right when he says that they show that the New Testament writers "drew from a common reservoir of terminology and ideas which were well known to the Essenes, and presumably familiar also to other Jewish sects of the period"'. He also quotes with approval F. M. Braun to the effect that 'these links are important as showing the Jewishness of the Fourth Gospel, so that instead of dismissing it as late and influenced by Greek thought, we must allow that it is genuinely Jewish in origin'.

A long article by Professor Oscar Cullmann (published in two parts in *THE EXPOSITORY TIMES*, lxxi. [October and November, 1959]) under the title 'A New Approach to the Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel' lends further support to the argument in favour of the Palestinian origin of this Gospel. He discusses at length the meaning of the word 'Hellenists' as it is



used in the Acts of the Apostles, which has puzzled commentators. He points out the difficulties of earlier interpretations, such as the suggestion that they are Greek-speaking Jews or Jews from the Diaspora who had become Christians, and argues instead that this was a name given to non-conformist groups within Judaism, who were suspected by orthodox Jews of favouring ideas which they regarded as derived from the paganism of Greek culture. Some of these were converted to the Christian faith—men such as Stephen—and thereby incurred a double measure of hatred from their fellow-Jews, firstly because of the 'heretical' form of Judaism they had favoured and secondly because of their 'schism' in joining the Christians. This would, at any rate, explain the puzzling sentence in Acts which records that the Hellenists among the Christians were persecuted out of Jerusalem, whereas the apostles were allowed to remain there (Ac 8<sup>1</sup>).

Professor Cullmann argues that a recognizable link existed between these so-called Hellenists, and other nonconformist groups within Judaism, such as the sectarians in the community at Qumran. In particular they shared an outspoken opposition to the Temple, at least in the form in which they knew it at that time. Stephen certainly vehemently denounced the attitude of Jews to their Temple, as, for instance, in Ac 7<sup>48-49</sup>. The Qumran community believed that the authorized priesthood of their day was unfit to serve in the Temple. Professor Cullmann argues that this same hostility to the Temple is characteristic of the Fourth Gospel, for example 4<sup>21</sup>, and he believes that its author had himself been one of the 'Hellenists' among the Jews, before he became a Christian. He suggests that the Synoptic tradition took shape among Christians who had been orthodox Jews before their conversion, whereas the Fourth Gospel (and, he would add, the Epistle to the Hebrews also) developed among Christians who previously had been 'non-conformist' Jews, that is 'Hellenists'. 'In this case', he writes, 'it will no longer be possible to consider the Johannine type as a later, non-Palestinian product merely because it is further removed from the tendencies of official Judaism than the Synoptic type'.

A similar emphasis is found in a very recent article in *New Testament Studies* [January 1960] by Dr. J. A. T. Robinson. He reminds readers how fundamentally Jewish the Fourth Gospel is. In the whole of the book there is not a single reference to Gentiles. 'It is the most Hebraic book in the New Testament, except perhaps for the Apocalypse.' 'All the controversies in the Fourth Gospel take place within Judaism.' 'This fits with many other indications that the "heimat"

of the Johannine tradition, and the milieu in which it took shape was the heart of southern Palestinian Judaism. . . . John's is essentially an Aramaic-speaking background.' He significantly reminds us that when Paul, in Gal 2<sup>9</sup>, affirms that his own commission is to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, he equally emphatically affirms that James and Cephas and John (we should notice that John is included) are 'to go to the circumcised'. That is, John's commission was to evangelize the Jews—presumably the Jews of Palestine. The author of the Fourth Gospel, writes Dr. Robinson, 'always speaks like a Jew and as a Jew of Palestine'. He believes that the Evangelist 'stood in what has aptly been called the "pre-gnostic" stream of Jewish wisdom mysticism'. His Gospel 'is composed of material which took shape as teaching within a Christian community in Judaea. . . . But in its present form it is, I am persuaded, an appeal to those outside the Church, to win to the Faith that Greek-speaking Diaspora Judaism to which the author now finds himself belonging as a result (we may surmise) of the greatest dispersion of all which has swept from Judaea both Church and Synagogue alike.' In this Dr. Robinson appears to support a suggestion earlier made by Professor Albright that whereas the material of the Fourth Gospel took shape in Palestine, the author had to leave Palestine in the disaster which overwhelmed it in A.D. 70, and came to reside in Ephesus (if the old tradition can be relied on), where he passed on to the Christians there the kind of teaching about Jesus with which he was already familiar, and later was persuaded to commit it to writing. So this Gospel-material came into being in Palestine, but the Gospel itself in the form we know it, was written in the Diaspora with an evangelistic purpose, and seeks to commend the Christian faith to Greek-speaking Jews of the Diaspora.

Professor A. M. Hunter contributed two articles to the March and April numbers (1960) of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES under the title: 'Recent Trends in Johannine Studies'. In them he underlines conclusions about the Fourth Gospel which recent books have tended to emphasize—the 'Aramaic Accent' of the Gospel, its accurate knowledge of the topography of Palestine, its similarities with certain features of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the increasing recognition that this Gospel preserves certain historical facts about the life and ministry of Jesus which the Synoptics omit or misunderstand. It is significant that all these 'trends' point in the same direction as the other contributions we have briefly considered.

The aim of this article has not been to settle a problem, as yet unsolved, but to illustrate how



in recent years there has been a growing tendency to locate the origins of the Johannine tradition in Palestine, rather than in the Gentile world. Certainly there is much which is better explained on this hypothesis than on the assumption that it is a Greek Gospel written primarily for Gentile readers. If this new approach to the Gospel is confirmed by further investigation, some interesting and important consequences follow:

(1) The date of the Gospel may be placed much earlier than used to be thought possible. A. M. Hunter suggests that 'it might have been written about A.D. 80; but then again it might have been written a decade earlier'.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the date of the material out of which the written Gospel was formed may be considerably earlier, perhaps even as early as that of the Synoptic tradition.

(2) A close association of the Apostle John himself with this Gospel becomes less improbable than it has been thought in many studies of the subject.

(3) The Johannine tradition may very well, not

<sup>1</sup> THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, lxxi. [April, 1960].

only offer a spiritual interpretation of the significance of Jesus, but also preserve a genuine understanding of one aspect of the historical Jesus, not very adequately presented in the Synoptic Gospels. It may well be as Professor Albright has written: 'One of the strangest assumptions of critical New Testament scholars and theologians is that the mind of Jesus was so limited that any apparent contrast between John and the Synoptics must be due to differences between early Christian theologians. Every great thinker and personality is going to be interpreted differently by different friends and hearers.'<sup>2</sup> It is not that the Johannine portrait is right and the Synoptics wrong, but rather that in each there may be preserved a true emphasis which the other fails to do full justice to. The Fourth Gospel may therefore have its own contribution to make, not only to those who wish to grasp the eternal significance of Jesus Christ, but also to those who wish to gain a clear insight into the historical personality of Jesus of Nazareth.

<sup>2</sup> *Background to the New Testament and its Eschatology*, 171.

## In the Study

### Virginibus Puerisque

'Opsed'

BY H. F. MATHEWS, M.A., PH.D., KIDDERMINSTER

'Thou art neither cold nor hot.'—Rev 3<sup>15</sup>.

You don't know the word? I am not surprised. Nor did I until last week. I was driving back home and the car was getting thirsty, so I was on the look-out for petrol. It was evening, and several garages that came in sight bore a lugubrious notice outside: 'Closed'. That was not to be wondered at. But things were growing serious, and I scanned every garage with greater care. It was then that I noticed one which said 'Opsed'. Not 'Open'. Not 'Closed'. Just 'Opsed'.

You will have guessed now what had happened. They had outside one of those signs made of a hinged metal plate mounted on a larger back-board. Turn the hinged plate one way and the sign reads 'Open'; turn it the other and it reads 'Closed'. But the hinged plate had broken off, and we were left with the 'Op' of 'Open' and the 'sed' of 'Closed'. It looked as though it had been like that for a long time too. And when I took a look round the rest of the garage, I knew why. It didn't look a very lively place. The door was open; some tools were lying about, but I

could find no one to produce petrol. The sign was about right: it was neither open nor closed.

Which is just about what John in his Patmos prison thought about the Christian house-church at Laodicea. It was a wealthy enough place, now that the woollen trade was doing well up the Lycus Valley and the merchants were busy. But the Christians there had grown comfortable. They weren't bad people: John didn't mean that they were. They kept up their regular meetings, and so on. But they had forgotten that, not so very far away, their fellow-Christians were in daily danger of death from Emperor Domitian's persecutors. They were all right at Laodicea. ('I'm all right, Jack' might have been their motto.) So John told them that they were neither cold nor hot. They were just 'opsed' Christians.

But we dare not try to be followers of Jesus without being utterly sincere in our following. It is not just a matter of doing this and saying that: it is a total promise that we belong to Him for all His mighty plans in the world. John Wesley had a famous sermon in which he warned people of the eighteenth century of the falsehood of going only part of the way with Christ: his sermon was called 'The Almost Christian'.

Many of us have been hard at work lately in writing reports—those fearsome pieces of literature



which fathers read so diligently. It is quite easy to write about the form paragon, who is top of everything and full of good works. It is not too difficult to sum up the out-and-out scallywag, who slacks his way through the lower fourth and always hands in his preps. late and is at the root of every spot of bother. But the really difficult report to write is that of the boy who is neither cold nor hot: he does just enough work to keep out of trouble; he watches the school team when he must; he isn't a really bad influence, but he is no good either. He just gets by.

Old John Ruskin once found a building which bore a small piece of sculpture high up, only one side of which could be seen. Ruskin saw that the face side was competently carved. But when he climbed up to examine it, he discovered that the sculptor had left the unseen side bare and rough. He swore that only a scoundrel could do a thing like that. So he went to the trouble of tracing through the town records and found—to his great delight—that the man had at last been imprisoned for getting money by false pretences.

Set against that a fine story which Dr. Leslie Church tells. After the First World War he was minister of a London church, and the layman who was responsible for preparing the Communion Table was one of the busiest men in the world; he afterwards became Lord Stamp. One Sunday morning, just before the service, Dr. Church found his friend getting ready the bread and wine. He explained that he had only just arrived back from Central Europe where he had been engaged on important international business: he had not even stopped to sleep. Dr. Church said, 'But why did you not leave this to someone else? You have so many more important things to do than the rest of us.' And the future Lord Stamp replied: 'There is nothing more important than laying the Table of the Lord'. Nothing lukewarm about *that* sort of Christianity!

We don't need a special thermometer to take our temperatures about this, do we? What are we, cold or hot?

### Running with Patience

BY THE REVEREND N. SOULSBY, OLDHAM

'And let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.'—He 12<sup>1f</sup>.

'And let us run with patience the race . . .'. What! Run a race with patience? Surely the writer to the Hebrews has taken hold of the wrong word, somehow. How could one possibly run a race with patience? Do you think Derek

Ibbotson runs his races with patience? I wonder?

Picture a sports stadium. A group of athletes are waiting at the starting line for the starter's pistol. Poised there with backs bent, chins up, minds on the alert, bodies tense as they weigh heavily on heel and toe ready for the final thrust forward at the signal for the off. Run with patience? Surely impatience would be a better word to describe the mood of these men at that moment, would it not? There are the runners, keyed up to the highest pitch both mentally and physically, each intent on breaking the record, be it in seconds or minutes, and all intent on winning the coveted trophy. Are they like racehorses champing at their bits, impatiently waiting to be off at the least slackening of their reins? Or are they like bloodhounds straining at their leashes, ready to bound away after their quarry whilst its scent is still strong in their nostrils? No! Strange as it may seem, our writer to the Hebrews is quite right in his choice of a word.

The Greek word he uses for patience means calm, steady endurance. Is not this the very quality an athlete needs to help him to the tape? Of course it is, and the writer to the Hebrews must have seen many such feats of athletic skill to be able to write with so much understanding. He may even have seen Olympic Games in their original setting, and the strenuous training of the athletes before their entry into the arena. But most of all, he knew that it was very important these men should keep their nerve. If they were fidgety and edgy, and anxious about their chances of success, then the prize would not go to them. They must cultivate the art of being patient. Is not this true of life generally? Yes, it is, and it is a quality of character we must all try to develop.

But the writer of the letter to the Hebrew Christians has something more to say to us about running this race of life—'And let us run with patience the race that is set before us', he says, 'looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith'. What a privilege it must be to have a champion for a trainer in one's gymnasium or sports club; someone who can teach us from his first-hand experience. Just imagine if you had Derek Ibbotson to train you in your sprinting, or Peter May to coach you in your cricket! Well, that is exactly what the writer to the Hebrews is saying. He is telling us that Jesus is our champion, our leader, our trainer. And is there anyone better fitted since He has covered the course and finished victorious? How do we know this to be true? Merely because we have read about Jesus in the New Testament? No, not only for that reason, but because countless men and women testify to His wonderful leadership



in their lives now, to-day, as it has been every day since He won the race of life on earth.

I wonder if you will be able to say with St. Paul, 'I have finished my course. I have kept the faith'?

## The Christian Year

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

### This Particular Religion

BY THE REVEREND DAVID H. C. READ, D.D.,  
NEW YORK

'And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.'—Jn 1<sup>st</sup>.

They tell a story in Scotland about an Edinburgh family that, for business reasons, had to take up residence in Glasgow. On the night before the move the mother heard her little boy say his prayers. When he came to his usual end he paused, and then added sadly: 'Good-bye God—we're going to Glasgow'. The story may also be told about many communities. Local patriotism and prejudice run very strong in all countries and in all ages. And so it has generally been supposed that Nathanael was voicing this local prejudice and his question has been the text of countless sermons on petty chauvinism and bigotry.

However much we need such reminders, I don't believe that this Nathanael, who is pictured for us as a man of intelligence and honesty of heart—'an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile'—was likely to take such a swipe at a rival community. I see him as a man who was shocked to be told that his great dream had come true and was localized right there at Nazareth. Nathanael was a profoundly religious man, steeped in the best traditions of his race. But like most religious men and women he was not really prepared for a concrete realization of his prayers and aspirations. He believed in God as the ultimate factor in human life, and he looked for His intervention in the shape of some kind of supernatural Deliverer when affairs got out of hand. But to be told that God was acting now, just round the corner; that the Deliverer had come and could be seen in Nazareth—that was more than he could take.

One of the strongest tendencies in popular religious thinking is 'Nathanaelism'. Church members say that it is the *factual element* in the creeds and confessions that gives them most trouble. On the fringe of the Church we find hundreds of men and women of goodwill who are held back from membership by this same thing. They are unable to commit themselves to the

belief that one series of incidents in the whole range of human history can have this decisive importance. They believe in God and in a general way they accept the principles that Jesus stands for, but they are shocked by the claim that this particular Jesus, who lived at a particular time, in a particular place, can be the ultimate revelation of Almighty God to men. So long as the Church talks about the Divine in general and about the best way of life for us all, they are content.

In the world outside the Church Nathanaelism is universal. It was hard enough to see the significance of Nazareth in the sixteenth century when men broke out of their constricted Christendom and roamed the world to find new continents, new knowledge, and a myriad systems of belief. It was harder still in the nineteenth century when the perspective deepened to include the billions of years that preceded man's appearance on the earth. And it may be still harder to-day as our thoughts reach out to the distant galaxies and the increasing probability that somewhere there may be other creatures not unlike ourselves. As we stretch our minds backwards and forwards through the infinitudes of space and time, it is no wonder that we should sometimes feel: 'Can there any good thing—any final truth, any absolute value—come out of Nazareth?'

Christian thinkers have been aware of this problem from the beginning. St. Paul felt it when he tried to preach the gospel to the sophisticated at Athens. 'When they heard of the resurrection . . . some mocked, and others said, we will hear thee again of this matter.' This has always been the rub—what the nineteenth century began to call 'the scandal of particularity'. How, then, has it been met? For we must remember that some of the finest minds in every age, including our own, have held together the profoundest understanding of the universe as disclosed by science and general philosophy with an unqualified acceptance of this particular religion—the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord.

We will understand this best if we begin by thinking about how, in fact, we obtain our truest knowledge about anything. Is it not always mediated to us by a particular person, at a particular time and place? A Newton, a Curie, an Einstein, a Fleming makes a discovery. The idea is incarnate in a man or woman who is thoroughly localized in space and time. So it is in the most intimate areas of our human life. There is no more absorbing and exalting experience than that which we try to describe by the word 'love'. Yet every true lover knows the difference between love in general and love in particular. Love, to be really love, must always centre down on the



beloved. So it is with love in the wider sense. A broad humanitarianism, a general sense of goodwill to all, has little meaning: such love only becomes real in the act, the cup of cold water, the concrete kindness, the particular gift.

Is it then strange to hear that religion also becomes real to us as it finds a local and particular focus and expression? Just as the man who remains 'in love with love' never comes to know what love means, so we can miss the supreme experience of our lives by remaining 'religious about religion', and never letting a particular religion get a grip upon our souls. Naaman revolted against the particularity of the prophet's cure. Wash in Jordan? Yet, just as Naaman condescended to the particular, washed in Jordan, and was cleansed, so men and women of every temperament and background, have listened to the voice from Nazareth, have seen the event of Calvary, have accepted the witness of the apostles to their Risen Lord, and so have found their salvation in 'this particular religion'.

Why *this* one? What about the other religions? If we are uncommitted, by all means let us examine the claims of the great religions of the world—but, if we are serious, we shall begin by a real investigation of the religion of our background. If we are not willing to do that then we are really choosing to stay forever 'religious about religion', losing the chance of knowing what it really means.

But, if in all seriousness and looking for what religion can really mean when one is committed, you still ask: Why Christ? then the answers I would give could all be summarized in the three words Philip spoke to Nathanael: 'Come and see'.

'Come and see.' The New Testament is open. The worship of the Church is continuous around the world. The works of Christ are to be seen in every corner of the land. When with open minds and receptive hearts we come to see this Christ we shall begin to understand why none who truly meet Him can ever turn away elsewhere to find a deeper truth, a more satisfying faith. What we discover when we come to see is the supreme and stupendous claim of this particular religion. It is not our claim, but His; and it is that the eternal God has given, not just new ideas, not stimulus, new hopes, but has given *Himself* in Jesus Christ. The universal, general, all-embracing love of God has here been focused—in this particular Person, this one among millions, this Jesus. This is the 'good thing' for all men that has 'come out of Nazareth'.

When we come to Christ we do not find He invalidates all other particular religions. On the contrary the Christian finds he has more in common with other believers than with those

whose religion is entirely general and vague. 'I am not come to destroy', He says, 'but to fulfil.' And He fulfils by revealing Himself to us as the Lord of all men. This is the strange and haunting mystery of Jesus Christ. He came to one people at one particular point of time. Yet He has made Himself known to all people in all periods of history. The good thing that came out of Nazareth—the little city you can pin-point on a map—is now seen to be God's universal gift. That is why to Nathanael, once he had accepted this particular Jesus of Nazareth, there was given eventually the vision of His eternal significance: 'Ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man'.

There is no short-cut to a full and satisfying faith. No general religion can be constructed that has any real life or validity. The entrance to the universal Kingdom is always along a particular path. And those who choose *this* particular path—the narrow way that leads by Nazareth—will find that it leads them stage by stage to an ever-widening understanding of the family of God, and an ever-brighter vision of His glory. That is the challenge of this particular religion. That is the offer of this particular Christ. Come and see.

#### TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

##### The Prodigal Parent

BY THE REVEREND TOM DICK, M.A., IRVINE

'Deal gently for my sake with the young man.'—  
2 S 18<sup>d</sup>.

Though Absalom has been called 'the prodigal son of the Old Testament' the resemblance is purely superficial, for this particular prodigal son had a prodigal father. A strange way that, perhaps, to refer to a great soldier, a great statesman, and a great soul—the father of a people, who welded Israel from a loose confederacy of quarrelling tribesmen into a great nation. The anointed of God, David rose from the humblest place to the highest, and his must surely rank as one of the great success stories in history. 'From Shepherd's tent to King's Palace', and his own merit provided the impetus of his meteoric rise. By nature and character he was beyond doubt one of the world's great ones—a born leader of men. Yet in one important respect he was a failure. David failed as a father. He who fathered a whole nation, could not father his own son. Well might he have made the lamentation, 'They made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept'. And in the end he would willingly have bartered all his successes in exchange for the chance to redress his sad deficiency.



To-day we have on our hands a grave problem of juvenile delinquency, and that despite the fact that more money than ever before is being spent on education and welfare. In a small provincial burgh malicious damage to municipal property amounted in one year to over £600 which, if that be taken as an average, represents a national bill of something like two million pounds for the replacement of broken lamps and windows, before you begin to think about the more important question of repairing the warped young minds and souls that have caused the damage. And when you address yourself to that problem, you will find, behind the delinquent child, the delinquent parent, who may not teach his children to go around breaking lamps and windows, and stealing other people's property, but who shatters the Law of God, and the values upon which an ordered society is built, destroying the lamps God has set for our guidance on the road of life. Countless parents to-day, in their own less spectacular, but no less costly way, are repeating David's follies, and that is why it is timely to examine the factors in his failure as a father.

1. *Misplaced Devotion.* Don't imagine that David didn't love his children; he loved them with all his heart. Absalom had all the advantages. Fair of countenance and strong of frame, he was surrounded with all the grandeur that befits a royal prince. His father gave him everything he asked for, and Absalom knew that, with a little persuasion, he would accede even to the most outrageous request. Like many youngsters to-day, Absalom suffered not from lack of devotion—there are, happily, fewer cases nowadays of child neglect in its traditional forms—he suffered rather from a misplaced devotion that amounted to indulgence. But slackness is not love. What Absalom suffered from was a devotion that was no kindness at all. When Amnon committed his foul sin, we read 'David did not trouble the spirit of Amnon, his son, because he loved him'. Don't be deceived, David! Love for your son is the very best reason in the world for troubling him about his sin. Had you troubled Amnon's spirit then, Absalom might never have become a murderer and a conspirator—he might have carried the crown more wisely and nobly than Solomon, instead of coming to an ignominious end, buried in dishonour beneath an oak tree. 'Deal gently for my sake with the young man.' And who is the young man? A rascal and a rebel! What right has he to leniency, who gladly would snatch the crown from off his father's anointed head? While the king in David is commissioning his soldiers to quell a rebellion, the father in him is beseeching them for the safe return of his son. And, when the noise of battle

is stilled, and all the people are rejoicing in the King's victory, a lonely, broken-hearted father is weeping in a little room above the Gate of Mahanaim and crying through his tears: 'Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son'. And maybe he is thinking in his heart—'The blame is mine! I gave you everything—everything except the things that really matter. Everything except character. Everything except my time, my prayers, myself.'

2. *Delegated Responsibility.* 'Deal gently for my sake with the young man.' These instructions, issued to his General on the eve of battle, are, I imagine, typical of the kind of instructions he had been issuing all along—parent by proxy—delegating to others the responsibilities that were inalienably his own. Let us not judge David too harshly. The affairs of State, doubtless left him little time for his family. But the irony of it is that, while David was burning himself out so that he would have a worthy kingdom to pass on to his son, the boy, for whose sake he was doing it, was drifting farther and farther away from him. Countless fathers and mothers to-day, anxious that their children should, as they say, 'have a chance in life', are working round the clock to improve the material amenities of their homes. Their aim, they say, is 'to give their children a chance', and all the time they are robbing them of the one chance they want and need most of all—the chance of their parents' help, guidance, and companionship. A beneficent State may assume the rôle of fairy godmother, but the best she has to offer is a poor substitute for the blessings of a happy family life. The homely old song has been parodied to bring it up-to-date:

I love the Day Nursery where they take me each day,  
And the fields which Prince Philip has opened for play;  
The Clinic where I get my vitamins free,  
But my mother—God bless her—she never sees me!

3. *Squandered Influence.* The influence a parent wields over his child is one of the most terrifying powers we possess. Its potentiality for good or evil is unimaginable. To the child, the parent stands in the place of God—the embodiment of all that is good and desirable. The one ambition which every child, regardless of circumstances, has every chance of realizing, is that expressed in the words: 'I'm going to be like Daddy'. Absalom was the prodigal son of a prodigal father who had himself succumbed to fleshly lust, and himself had drawn a murderous sword to keep it dark—and the whole sordid story, which he thought was long since dead, buried, and forgotten, came to light in the experience of the son he loved. Before his very eyes, he saw the same tragic sequence of events unfolding, but



David was powerless to arrest Absalom's fall, because he had squandered his influence. He had forfeited the right to be listened to on moral issues. God help the man who causeth his child to stumble, for though, like David, he may repent and be forgiven, like David also, he who has led his son into the far country may come home alone.

Wherever we may succeed or fail in the running of our lives, let us not fail in this, for he who shall leave behind him no other memorial than children to thank God for him and call him blessed, shall surely win the accolade of heaven.

'Deal gently with the child for my sake.' That is the Lord's commission to Christian parents. Give them your love, your example, yourself, and through these things, give Christ to them, and them to Christ.

### THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

#### Our Attitude to Tradition

BY THE REVEREND R. LEONARD SMALL, O.B.E.,  
D.D., EDINBURGH

'He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him.'—2 K 2<sup>13</sup>.

This phrase about the mantle of Elijah is one of many from the Bible which have passed into our common speech and, in so doing, have become divorced from their original context, and sometimes in the process been robbed of much of their real significance. Any journalist, according to his particular line, can write that: 'The mantle of J. M. Barrie has fallen on this up-and-coming young playwright', or 'The mantle of Godfrey Evans looks like settling on the shoulders of So-and-so', but in neither case is he using anything like the full colour of the original expression. There is much more to this than any mere taking-over or succession. Even a brief study of this verse can suggest much that is challenging in relation to the ever-recurring vexed question of the right attitude to tradition.

The mantle of Elijah is a trust to be handled with reverence and responsibility. Going back to the original story reminds us of a vital point about any tradition worth having—it is living, not dead. This mantle belonged to Elijah, and Elisha had always seen it on him. He had watched it fall from his shoulders. It was the traditional prophet's robe, made of camel's hair, and practically indestructible. In its folds he had slept in the desert, in this he had wrapped his face on Mount Horeb from before the splendour of God; this was the robe he gathered up when he ran before the chariot to Jezreel. This has been part of a great life of courage and faith and achievement. You cannot fling it in a corner like a bit of

old sacking. That is exactly the issue which confronts each of us any time we gather on a spot made sacred by traditions of worship there, to take on our lips the faith of our fathers, the faith we *say* we believe. We may question much of it, or doubt all of it. We may see its weaknesses in theory and its failures in practice; we may pick huge intellectual holes in it, and conclude that it no longer fits our kind of knowledge. An inquiry carried out last winter among students of Edinburgh University revealed that on entry to the University something like a quarter of the men, and rather fewer of the women, profess no form of Christian belief. By the fourth year of their study this graph of indifference shows a steep rise for both sexes. In the 'real' world of trade, industry, and commerce this faith which in Scotland is part of our national heritage is widely neglected. Where did we win the right to discard this 'mantle of Elijah' out of hand in this way? This faith comes to many of us in Scotland still, directly and literally from our fathers, or at least our grandfathers, as part of a local and personal inheritance and tradition. In the strength of this faith they lived finely, often in humble ways. They dealt sanely with success and failure; they handled wisely both joy and sorrow; they faced the last enemy unafraid. From that personal application the line stretches back and widens out to become the tradition of a whole people and the heritage of a nation. If we ever treat any vital living tradition with this kind of careless contempt we are bound to be the poorer—all of us. The generations which lie behind us in our history, personal and corporate, were not all fools and blind; nor is the generation that raises cynicism and 'debunking' into a cult the first clever enough to unmask the hypocrisy and childish superstition of their own forebears. The net result of this attitude is to leave us, all of us, with no one to look up to, none to emulate, nothing to inspire. The mantle of a living tradition must be handled with reverence and responsibility.

The mantle of Elijah is a challenge; it is there not to be looked at and admired but adapted and worn. It was almost a uniform, that mantle, like the habit of a monk. When Elisha put it on he was binding himself to that same service of a prophet. Probably he had to adapt it a little, he gathered it up here, wrapped it tighter there, until he had fitted it to himself. He was girding himself to carry on the work Elijah had done, to do the things he did. That is the one right and proper way to use a living tradition; not to put it in a glass case marked 'Do Not Touch' but to use it. Another Old Testament story can point the moral here. Saul could think of no other equipment for the stripling David going out to fight Goliath than



the full armour of a man who stood head and shoulders above all others in Israel. What a ludicrous and dangerous misfit! No wonder David put them off, exclaiming: 'I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them'. That lesson still needs to be learned, though it should be obvious. Christine Truman cannot be expected to win a Wightman Cup match at the pace of modern women's tennis wearing the dress in which Mrs. Lambert-Chambers won at Wimbledon in the beginning of the century. In 1935, at a special Service in St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, a young lad, present-day descendant of King Robert the Bruce, carried Bruce's own sword into Church and laid it on the Communion Table—a proud day for him in a line of tradition. But the same lad would not have fought German tanks in France in 1940 with that sword, however famous. We have to take this faith, these ideas and ideals, all these standards of living, long-tried and tested, and fit them to the needs of a new situation and another generation. Most obvious is the challenge to do this in the Church and in family life. We elder folk must not try to impose the dead hand of a tradition by force or authority, even if we are convinced that we are right. The younger generation must claim the right to make what is old and tried their own in terms of their quite different world. To do any less is a denial of the living God.

The mantle of Elijah is the symbol of a spirit, a spirit that must be kept alive. In the original story the sons of the prophets are impressed, not that the mantle of Elijah rests on the shoulders of Elisha, but that the spirit of the great predecessor had descended on his successor. That is what matters. One could sometimes wish to see a kind of pageant of the story of Scotland covering these four hundred years, each scene directly challenging some of us to show in our so different situation a like spirit. Let Knox and our Reformers shake us out of this wistful, sentimental celebration of their memory, and wake us into sharing their care and concern for a living faith and for Christ's Kingdom in our midst. From the Covenanting days let John Brown, the country carrier who died for his faith on the Lanarkshire moors, shake some of our country folk out of their pagan contentment never to have had it so good, and Margaret Wilson, singing as she drowns in Solway's tide, aged eighteen, ask her teen-age sisters of to-day if they care no more what she sang about. Let the lie be given to the saying: 'The Church means exactly nothing to the working-classes' and let it be given by David Livingstone from the mill at Blantyre and Mary Slessor from her loom at Dundee. Let men of faith and sacrificial self-giving like William Quarrier and Dr. Guthrie

challenge the current motto of 'More and more for doing less and less'. In every instance the final question is just this: 'How can we at our various levels, and according to the gifts God has given us, show the same spirit?' There can be only one answer, that spirit must be found where they found it; it can only be learned from Him who taught it to them. Perhaps this mantle of Elijah was the Old Testament counterpart of the other garment made familiar to millions through Lloyd Douglas's novel *The Robe*. A living tradition in the Christian faith is like them both—you can hold it in your hands, you can put it on, and then you can have His Spirit.

#### FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

##### Harvest

BY THE REVEREND H. HOWARD WILLIAMS, B.A.,  
B.D., PH.D., LONDON

'I appeal to you, therefore, brethren, . . . to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.'—Ro 12<sup>1</sup> (R.S.V.)

I once belonged to a church where a family objected to Harvest services. I believe they thought them a bit worldly and not true spiritual worship of the kind they liked to offer. Many people think like this. Harvest is near to people who have gardens and allotments, and when they dig up some potatoes and bring them to church it is difficult to think of this as worship. So I want you to think now of Harvest and the Table—the Lord's Table. Bishop Gore once said that the Table of sacrifice in the Early Christian Church must have looked like our churches at a Harvest Festival. Gifts of all sorts were brought, and from the consecrated gifts the bread and wine were taken for the Supper of the Lord, and the rest became 'a pious trust for the poor, for the orphans and the aged, for those in trouble or necessity and for the confessors in the mines and the prisons'.

The God who creates and the God who redeems is one God, so we have learned. The Harvest and the Table of the Lord both speak of sacrifice and the offering. So I want you to look at three scenes with me, and see what it means to bring gifts to God.

*The Offering of Man.* In the forest all is still. At the end of a path a group of people sit around a circle of stones. They are bringing gifts to their God. Cereals and animals are brought, and from the crude altar there comes the smoke of a sacrifice. It doesn't seem a sensible thing to do. I don't know that the people themselves would see much sense in it, but somehow it tells of their love and



they are doing what they feel compelled to do. It is a gift to God, for man cannot come to God empty-handed even though he is ashamed of what he brings. There is joy in this bringing, and sorrow too. For the gift, now, is an animal, and the blood is shed. The blood is the life, and the man bringing his gift feels as though it is his own blood—his own life—which is being offered. No poor and cheap thing can be given; it must be costly, and the worshipper gives himself in his gift.

For us the scene is full of a fascinating horror. We like to see the sense of things, and here there is none. Yet men through centuries of time have done this thing. Simple and ignorant men bringing some precious life from their flocks—and the knife flashes and the blood flows—perhaps God will accept it. Who knows?

Here is a woman placing flowers on a grave. Remember, someone says, the cost of flowers—what good will it do?—go home now and forget. But she goes only to come again with yet more flowers. Go home, we say, to these simple people, and end these silly ways; but it will not do to say this, for in the giving there is the cry of the heart for God dimly perceived and yet there. So one takes a gift, and it is accepted by God, and once more there is expiation and man is reconciled with God.

*The Offering of Christ.* Christians of course don't bring these sacrifices. They claim the name of one sacrifice offered once and for all. 'The Lamb of God', they cry, 'which taketh away the sin of the world.' This, too, is a mystery, and those of us who speak most about it often wonder what it all means. Here, then, is the second picture. Outside a city wall, in no ritual temple nor sheltered by any circle of stones, Christ offered Himself. The people of those days knew what it meant to bring a lamb. Josephus tells us in sickening statistics of the thousands of lambs brought for sacrifice, and the blood and stench of it passes our imagination. But this sacrifice of Christ is different, surpassing all the gifts of Nature, for God was in it reconciling the world unto Himself.

The scene is prepared for us. Christ taken, scourged and nailed, Christ surrendering Himself to the will of His Father. Christ fixed and fastened to the Cross, yet free to offer a willing sacrifice. There was a time when men worshipped the sun in all its splendour of light and glory. Yet on this day, when the sun was still high, the sun itself, so we are told, was eclipsed. And in the darkness men saw the light which no darkness could overcome. The earth trembled and the dark graves opened, and from the caves of death came the life that brings hope and joy to the world.

The sky and the earth—darkness and trembling—and in the sacred place itself there came a tearing of the Temple veil, so that the altar and the mercy seat became one place. Sacred and secular, religion and life, object and subject, all the fashionable modern distinctions, on that day ceased holding men in thrall and the barriers of separation were broken down. God and man became one, and the fear and love of men lost themselves in the love which redeems.

You may have some difficulty in seeing how this second scene is linked with the first. It is linked by the mystery of sacrifice. Christ gave Himself in unlimited obedience to God and in abiding love and compassion for people.

*The Offering of Ourselves.* At Harvest time men bring their gifts and offer them with glad thanksgiving. It is possible to see all sorts of meanings in this, but the simple way is just to be glad because there is a gift to bring—and in the giving, out of sheer gratitude and joy, we offer ourselves. We shall see in time that it is not only what we bring that matters. This, in itself, helps us to see something of the meaning of Nature and Creation. But we come ourselves, and God will not rest if we leave our gift and take ourselves away to some other place.

We began with ancient people bringing cereals and animals to God and seeking to identify themselves with their gifts. We come to be identified with Christ Himself. The children of God offering themselves, their souls and bodies, as a living sacrifice in union with Christ. In Christ this miracle is achieved—in His dying and living, for death and life are not conflicting things any longer and dying is the gateway to life.

So we come in worship on this Harvest day. The God who creates and redeems is here. We come offering ourselves after the pattern and in the life of Christ. We do it over and over again, like the farmer doing his work—not put off by the changing weather. To give ourselves in this way is a greater offering than the whole realm of Nature.

This, then, is the third scene. People worshipping to-day linked in sacrifice with the story of men of all times, but finding life supremely in the sacrifice given once and for all. This is the work of those who worship—to give themselves, in obedience to God, for the common good. But there is mystery and miracle here also, for in bringing our poor unworthy selves we find that Christ takes this offering and offers the Church which is His body. The Table is surrounded by fruit and vegetables, but on the Table is the bread and wine. It is there we see what giving means, and then we, too, must be given—and, see, it fills a man with joy, for he has found the meaning of life.



## The Riddle of Genesis vi. 1-4

By PROFESSOR N. H. TUR-SINAI, JERUSALEM

ONE of the strangest passages in the Bible whose unsolved difficulties have puzzled many generations of scholars is Gn 6<sup>1-4</sup>, rendered by both Authorised and Revised Versions, with slight variations, as follows:

'And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God[s] [see later] saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all that they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not strive with [or, according to many ancient versions: "abide in", or: "rule in"; in Hebrew: יִרְוֹן] man forever, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them: the same were the mighty men which were of old, the men of renown.'

How came such a 'mythological' episode, about 'sons of god[s]' who took wives from among the daughters of men, about giants, mighty men of old, born out of this strange intermarriage, to be inserted within the main story, in between 5<sup>32</sup>, telling us about Noah's life and the birth of his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japhet, and 6<sup>5a</sup>: 'And the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth . . . And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; . . . But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord'? Why tell all this if no explanation is given how this episode links up with Noah and the flood?

To add to the difficulty, within this intercalation telling us about the intermarriage between sons of god[s] and the daughters of man, itself strangely interrupting the story of Noah and the great flood, another sentence is inserted in 6<sup>3</sup>, this again seemingly without any connexion with either the main story or the episode of sons of god[s] marrying the daughters of man: 'And the Lord said, My spirit shall not strive with [or: abide in, or: rule in] man forever, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.' If this sentence is meant to tell us of God's decision to limit every man's span of life, from now on, to one hundred and twenty years, why connect this with what is said here especially about sons of god[s] marrying daughters of man, or with the main story about Noah and the flood?

There are also other facts refuting the customary understanding of 6<sup>3</sup>: According to 9<sup>28a</sup>, Noah himself 'lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years'; even many generations later, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob reached the high age of one hundred and seventy-five, one hundred and eighty, and one hundred and forty-seven years respectively. Moreover, if God only wishes to limit man's life to a hundred and twenty years, this seems meaningless if, at the same time, He resolves to destroy mankind altogether immediately through the flood.

Furthermore, the verse, as it stands, presents also insurmountable linguistic difficulties. According to the meaning assumed for the sentence as a whole, it should express something like '—my spirit shall not always *abide* [or: *rule*] in man'. There is, however, no verb יִרְוֹן allowing such an interpretation in Hebrew or in any of its sister-languages. Neither does the translation chosen by the Authorised English Version and by some Jewish mediaeval commentators, such as Shelomo Yishaqi: 'My spirit shall not *strive* [*i.e.* strife, struggle] with man forever', fit either language or contents. Modern commentators, therefore, have proposed emendations, reading, for example, יָדוּר, יָלִין, or יָבֹן (*i.e.* dwell, stay) instead of יִרְוֹן; but the letter-changes involved, נ or ל for ר, or כ for ר, are unlikely in ancient Hebrew script, and these readings would create additional difficulties. Thus, for example, the verb דוּר (to dwell) is used in the Bible with a personal subject only, as in Ps 84<sup>10</sup> (Heb. יי): 'I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell [דוּר] in the tents of wickedness.' Furthermore, the writer would hardly have chosen the verb דוּר before the following word רִוְחִי ('my spirit') for phonetic reasons. And again: How could it be said (of the spirit): '. . . for that he also is flesh'? He also? Who else? Moreover, 'flesh', in Hebrew בָּשָׂר, is just another word for 'man', like the corresponding word *bashar* in Arabic. Finally, the text does not say: 'Yet shall his days be up to an hundred and twenty years', setting an extreme limit for man's life, but merely 'yet shall his days be an hundred and twenty years', fixing as it were a norm for every single man's life at one hundred and twenty years, not more and not less; this, however, would manifestly be absurd.



Now, all these difficulties are due merely to one slight mistake of a copyist, the kind of mistake found in hundreds of places in the Bible. Ancient Biblical Hebrew, as is now well known, had no vowel-signs nor did it use different forms for consonants according to their position in the middle of words or at their end, such as used in the Massoretic Bible for some of them. What the copyists transcribed as יִרְדֵּן רִנָּה—as it were: 'my spirit shall [not] abide'—represents originally only the letter-sequence ירנר. What the writer intended, however, is, with the slight metathesis of רנ instead of נר: ירנר meaning: יִרְדֵּן נָח i.e. 'Noah shall not dwell among man forever.' One of the two letters in question may originally even have stood above the line, as frequently in the Dead Sea Scrolls, and later been inserted in the

ר   נ

wrong place, reading נר instead of נ or ר.

Now the pieces of the puzzle fall into their proper places. The Bible actually said: 'And the Lord said, Noah shall not dwell among man forever for that *he* [Noah] *also* is flesh; he, too, is a human being, and his time among men—not his lifetime—shall be one hundred and twenty years'.

Thus also the meaning of the whole passage becomes clear. Man was no longer pure before God. His daughters had intermarried with 'sons of gods', with godly beings hostile to his Creator. Such 'sons of gods' are mentioned in the Book of Job and in the Ugaritic Epics; their existence must also be presumed for the background of the Biblical story of creation; it is referred to in Gn 1<sup>26</sup>: 'And God said, Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness', and one of them, hostile to the Lord, is the serpent of Gn 3. According to our story, these godly beings knew about the existence of Adam and man's first generations, and they corrupted man, raising a breed of giants. And as in the story about the Tower of Babel, this breed might challenge God's authority, similarly to what is said about the men of Babel (11<sup>6</sup>): 'And this is what they begin to do: And now nothing will be withholden from them which they purpose to do.' Among all the wicked men, however, there dwelt Noah who had been found righteous before the Lord; let him not 'dwell' among man forever and become corrupt like them. Only one hundred and twenty years from the time of God's decree shall he still dwell among man; then he will be ordered to leave them who will be destroyed.

Linguistically, the sentence 'Noah shall not dwell among man forever' is analogous to Ps 78<sup>60</sup>: 'So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent where he dwelt [so according to the ancient versions] among men.' The original text

יִרְדֵּן רִנָּה instead of יִרְדֵּן רִנָּה is further confirmed by what is said about Noah in 6<sup>9</sup> of the same passage: 'Noah was a righteous man, perfect in his *dwellings*' (בְּדִלְתָיו), not 'generations'. According to the Biblical story, Noah apparently did not stay at one 'dwelling', but changed his abode many times in order to avoid the 'tents of wickedness'; but even while he had to dwell among men, 'Noah walked with God'.

As a matter of fact, the understanding of the limit of a hundred and twenty years as referring not to man's lifetime but to the days between God's decision, as expressed in 6<sup>6</sup>, and the coming of the flood, is the traditional Jewish interpretation of our sentence, expressed by ancient translators and commentators. Thus, for example, the Aramaic Targum ascribed to Onkelos, omitting any rendering of 'my spirit': 'And the Lord said, This evil generation shall not remain before me forever for that they are flesh and their deeds are evil. A *respite shall be given them* of one hundred and twenty years if they repent', and similarly Targum Pseudo-Jonathan. Again, for example, Shelomo Yishāqi, following Talmudic tradition, explains: 'Until a hundred and twenty years I shall forbear them, but if they do not repent, I shall bring the flood upon them.'

These hundred and twenty years are counted from the time God expressed His decision until the coming of the flood and Noah's entry into the Ark. They should not be counted from the birth of Noah's children, mentioned in 5<sup>32</sup>, in the five hundredth year of Noah's life; according to 7<sup>11</sup>, Noah was six hundred years old when he entered the Ark, which would make the difference a hundred, not a hundred and twenty years. On this question Shelomo Yishāqi says: 'And if you contend: From the birth of Japhet until the flood there are only one hundred years [the answer is], the Torah does not always follow the exact chronological order. God's decision had already been made twenty years before the birth of Noah's sons, as is also said in the [book] Seder Olam' (at the end of ch. 28). And this is indeed the way the Bible tells its stories. In ch. 5 a chronological list is given of the first generations of man as a whole, including Noah, up to the birth of his sons, when he himself was five hundred years old. But God's decision to destroy mankind is told in a chapter of its own, not as part of the list of generations. This story, therefore, is put after the complete list, and connects God's decision with the events resulting from it. This decision was taken when, according to Biblical report, Noah was four hundred and eighty years old, before he had any children, a hundred and twenty years before the



coming of the flood. We may be able to reconstruct the sequence of events in the spirit of our Biblical passage: Those ancient people who told the story about Noah remaining righteous and god-fearing even when man's seed was contaminated by intermarriage with the sons of gods and had become hostile to the Lord, also told how God tried to keep Noah pure of any such contamination. For this purpose the Lord chose for him a chaste wife who then—during the twenty

years up to Noah's five hundredth year of life—bore him three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet.

Our verse 6<sup>3</sup> does not originally set a term for man's life. According to Biblical belief, the lifetime of man, or of a people, is determined by man's own deeds, as expressed in Dt 5<sup>33</sup>: 'Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.'

## Recent Foreign Theology

**The Epistle of James.** An exposition of the Epistle of James by Dr. E. Thurneysen, translated from German into French by C. Pittet, and published under the title *Faith and Works*,<sup>1</sup> has rather the character of a series of addresses than of a commentary. There is nothing of the usual introduction. Instead the author plunges at once into his exposition. He takes a short section, often only a verse or two, and then expounds it in a direct style which is calculated to nourish the spirit of his readers. To illustrate the thought of the Epistle on the relation between faith and works he appeals to the barometer. The rise of the barometer heralds good weather, but does not cause it. So salvation is not brought about by good works, but by the power of God, and the good works are but the evidence that the salvation has been experienced. It is the freshness of expression rather than originality of thought that gives value to this little book.

**Jeremiah.** From the same press a companion volume on the Book of Jeremiah comes from the pen of A. Aeschmann.<sup>2</sup> This has more of the normal character of a commentary. There is a useful introduction, dealing with the historical background of the work of Jeremiah, the compilation of the Book, the message of the prophet, and the personality and influence of Jeremiah. The text of the Bible is not given, but there are detailed notes on the text of each section before the exposition of the section as a whole is given. The author is cautious in rejecting passages as secondary and also in textual emendation. In recent years there has been a widespread rejection of the view that the background of the early prophecies of Jeremiah was the Scythian peril—a view familiar

to many English readers from the persuasive presentation of John Skinner. The Scythian view is still retained by Dr. Aeschmann. His work rests on a number of earlier commentators, including A. S. Peake's excellent Century Bible commentary. It is surprising that he shows no knowledge of Skinner's work, which is the outstanding interpretation of the life and work of Jeremiah offered to English readers during the present century.

**Qumran and the Text of Habakkuk.** W. H. Brownlee, who was the first translator of the Habakkuk Commentary which was found amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls, has now published a monograph on the textual variations found in the *lemmata* of that commentary.<sup>3</sup> Although the commentary is on the first two chapters of Habakkuk only, some one hundred and fifty variations may be found in its text as compared with the Massoretic text. Many of these consist merely of plene writings, and some are found in mediæval Hebrew manuscripts. These agreements are greatly reduced in significance, however, when it is realized that few are attested in any one manuscript. Professor Brownlee discusses carefully each of the variants in the Habakkuk Commentary, with full reference to the discussions that have been devoted to them by other scholars, and gives at the end analytical tables of the variants and of his findings, as well as of the mediæval manuscripts recorded in Kennicott and de Rossi which have readings in agreement with the Scroll. Much careful work has gone into this study. In most cases Professor Brownlee prefers the reading of the Massoretic text but in a few cases he decides for the Scroll, and especially where some ancient version reflects the same reading.

<sup>3</sup> *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran* [1959]. (Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series, vol. xi.). Society of Biblical Literature, Philadelphia, Pa.; \$1.50.

<sup>1</sup> *La Foi et les Oeuvres: Commentaire de l'Épître de Jacques* [1959]. Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchâtel and Paris; Swiss Fr. 7.50, bound 10.50.

<sup>2</sup> *Le prophète Jérémie: Commentaire* [1959]. Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchâtel and Paris; Swiss Fr. 9.50, bound 12.50.



**Dutch Commentary on Kings.** The Dutch Catholic Commentary on the Old Testament has been frequently mentioned in these columns, and several of the volumes have been from the pen of Dr. A. van den Born, one of the editors of the series. From his pen the latest volume of the series, on the Books of Kings,<sup>1</sup> has come. Like its predecessors this is excellent and up-to-date in scholarship—fragments of Kings in Qumran texts are mentioned, but could not be used as they are not yet published—and the full commentary which stands beneath the new translation takes account of the latest knowledge. The general position of the editor is that commonly adopted—that the Books of Kings formed the conclusion of the Deuteronomic historical work Joshua–2 Kings. He finds some later additions, though less than some scholars have found. He believes the work was originally planned to end with the fall of the Jerusalem monarchy, but thinks the closing verses, relating to Gedaliah and the release of Jehoiachin, were added later. A valuable feature of this commentary is an appendix containing translations of thirty-three ancient texts relevant to the study of Kings. These include the Moabite Stone, inscriptions of Zakir and Bar-Rekub, the Siloam inscription, and passages from many Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions. Amongst these will be found an extract from the Babylonian Chronicle recently published by D. J. Wiseman. Dr. van den Born thinks it is possible that amongst the sources used by the author of Kings may have been inscriptions of Israelite kings, now lost. Several passages begin with 'He it was who', and Dr. van den Born thinks these may be extracts from inscriptions beginning with 'I'—a common beginning, found in the Mesha and Bar-Rekub inscriptions—turned into the third person. If this speculation could be proved correct by some fortunate discovery, there would be much excitement amongst Biblical scholars.

**The Cure of Souls.** In the Swiss series published under the title *Bibliothèque Théologique* Ed. Thurneysen has issued a volume on *The Doctrine of the Cure of Souls*.<sup>2</sup> This will be found to be a helpful examination of the principles and practice of the pastoral office. That office is here conceived of as the ministry of the Word of God to individuals, as the preaching is the ministry of that Word to men collectively. The author would have the pastor acquainted with the techniques of psychiatry and psychology, though he does not conceive the pastor

as one who merely exercises human techniques. His concern is to understand that he may be able to minister Divine comfort where comfort is needed, to lead to confession where confession is necessary that pardon may be assured, and at all times to lead men to a true encounter with God, and to close association with the people of God and the ministry of the Word and sacraments. While every minister knows something of this side of his office, in the thought of some it figures less than it should, and there are few who would read this book without profit, or without being stirred by it to a deeper sense of the importance of this side of their work. The author emphasizes the need for as much consecration of spirit here as in the pulpit work of the minister, if he is truly to be the vehicle of the Divine Word to those committed to his care.

**Prayer in the New Testament.** A substantial volume devoted to the subject of prayer in the New Testament comes from the pen of Father A. Hamman.<sup>3</sup> An introductory section reviews the prayers of the Old Testament, with particular reference to the Psalter and the varieties of the psalms, and to the themes of Old Testament prayer. The author draws attention to the much larger part that prayer plays in the work of the Chronicler than in the older sources of Israelite history. Before turning to the New Testament, which has his main attention, he looks at the Synagogue and its prayers, and the place of prayer in the Qumran sect. All this is preliminary to the study of prayer in the New Testament. In the chapter devoted to the Synoptic Gospels particular attention is paid to the Lord's Prayer, which receives a long and careful exposition. Our Lord's teaching on prayer is also reviewed. Prayer in the Apostolic community is next examined. Here the Book of Acts and the Epistles other than those which bear the names of Paul and John are treated. There follows a long and careful chapter on Paul and prayer, in which a section is devoted to the study of the persons to whom Paul addresses his prayers, and the purposes of the Pauline prayers. The Epistle to the Hebrews is briefly treated in an appendix to this section, Father Hamman holding that the theology of this Epistle is Pauline, though its authorship is ascribed to a writer imbued with Alexandrian culture. The final section of the book deals with the Johannine writings. The volume is an important and scholarly work, which will be followed by a further volume continuing the study to the Council of Nicaea.

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<sup>1</sup> *Koningen (De Boeken van het Oude Testament, IV. ii.)* [1958]. Romen en Zonen, Roermond en Maaseik; Fl. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Doctrine de la Cure d'Ame* [1958]. Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchatel and Paris; Swiss Fr. 14.

<sup>3</sup> *La Prière : I. Le Nouveau Testament (Bibliothèque de Théologie)* [1958]. Desclée and Co., Tournai.



## Entre Nous

### Brother of the Angels

Every now and then every Church throws up a man who is quite out of the ordinary, and the life story of such a man makes fascinating reading. Such a man was Father Herbert Kelly, S.S.M., the founder of the community whose headquarters are now at Kelham. In *No Pious Person* (Faith Press; 15s. net) Father Kelly's story is told, partly in an introduction by David M. Paton, and partly in Father Kelly's own words, edited by George Every, S.S.M.

Father Kelly's aim was to produce a community of men who would be a genuinely consecrated and sacrificial ministry. He did not desire extraordinary men, for he laid it down as a first principle 'that Orders requiring very exceptional people are Orders of small influence'. In the beginning he did not propose to train men for ordination, and in the beginning the three principles were that men should be prepared to go absolutely anywhere that they were sent, that they should be quite unpaid, and that they should remain unmarried. Obedience, poverty, and celibacy were the three watchwords, although these principles had to be modified when Father Kelly's men went, not to the missionary, but to the home Church. He called his community 'The Society of the Sacred Mission', and dedicated it to the Angels, 'as our brothers, the messengers of God'.

Father Kelly had an almost overwhelming sense of God. It was his fear that 'the clergy are so absorbed in getting people to come to Church that the Church services have become a substitute for God'. He was further consumed with the idea that God should dominate all life. His complaint and his fear were: 'The worship of the parish Church is the key which should unlock the mystery of God in the world. Just so. Is it being used to unlock the mystery? Is it not being very generally used to lock the mystery up, to lock itself up—safely within the Church itself?' He used a military analogy: 'In two ways an army may be lost; if it breaks up, or if it takes refuge in a fortress'. The Church becomes ineffective if it breaks up into disunity, or if it withdraws into a churchiness which is a substitute for the living God.

Father Kelly, like his Master before him, always confronted men with the stern height of the uncompromising Christian demand. He had no time for the pleasant easy-going type of religion which preaches that 'God is nice and in him is no nastiness at all'. When men began to come into his community, he said: 'If I can scare them off, I have done the first part of my business'. David

M. Paton was at a retreat conducted by Father Kelly. He tells us that he has forgotten much. 'But one thing has lived with me ever since, a sentence-ending from one of his addresses, "... and then you might miss being crucified; and that would be a pity".'

Father Kelly was insistent on the duty of thought. 'There is no *right* of private judgment', he said, 'there is a *duty* of learning'. At Oxford he tells us that he himself learned two things—first, the width of God's world, and His interest therein, and, second, the habit of thinking. He magnificently defines thinking. 'Thinking is, I suppose, concerned with meanings, and in meanings we see, or are looking for, the universal under the particular, the one under the many, the law under the instance, the cause in the effect, the permanent under the changing, the eternal under the temporal.' It was his own criticism of himself in his early days: 'I was making dives for ultimates long before I knew how to make a solid road out of my facts'.

Perhaps the greatest section in the book is what Father Kelly wrote *Concerning Choice of Work*:

You may not choose your work; indeed, count not yourself worthy of any work.

You may prefer, however, that which is most dangerous, least notable, least popular. There will generally be room for you there.

Seek that which is lowest and most servile. This you can nearly always do safely.

Many read of washing the disciples' feet, who think themselves above cleaning another man's boots.

It is better to serve the least esteemed than the great. The service of the king is a high honour for which nobles contend, but to be the servant of the poor and contemptible is to imitate Christ.

If however you should be called to high and spiritual work, you may indeed fear and tremble, but you are not permitted to refuse as though you doubted your own powers, for you ought to be quite sure of your own incapacity—and of God's strength.

We may finally quote two things by way of footnotes. 'For some reason', Father Kelly all too truly says, 'the intellectual life in a Protestant college is on a far higher, the devotional life on a far lower, level than in Anglican colleges.'

And the last, a curious verdict at an S.C.M. Conference. 'I went to breakfast with Principal Whyte, an exceedingly sweet old don of the Presbyterian school that was due up about last century but two.'

Even Father Kelly's misjudgments are unique!  
WILLIAM BARCLAY

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